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THE MYSTICAL QUEST OF CHRIST

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THE MYSTICAL QUEST OF CHRIST

BY

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The Open Secret, Great Issues, Reconstruction, An Autobiography, etc.

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FOREWORD

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA at the end of the second century employed a singular term to designate the Christian; he always spoke of him as the Gnostic. The reason was that there had been all through the century a succession of schools which called themselves Gnostic. Leaders, like Basilides or Valentinus, spun out vast theories, not unlike the teachings of Theosophy to-day, with strange-sounding terms and elaborate and minute accounts of things unseen. This kind of Gnosis had the same kind of attraction in the second century that Theosophy has for many minds to-day. The adept, or the initiate, was in possession of a knowledge which could only be derived from him or her; and the part of common people was to accept thankfully this higher knowledge sent to them by these human channels.

As against these claims Clement implied that the Christian, as such, was the true Gnostic, as St. Paul had claimed to possess the true Gnosis (Eph. iii. 4). What was revealed in Christ was the utmost that we could know; and the additions made by the Gnostic systems were fictitious.

In the same way, I ask the reader to recognise in the Christian the true mystic. There has been much said and written about mysticism in recent years. The names of the mystics, and even their terminology and general methods, have become familiar. But a great element of mysticism enters into every genuine Christian experience. And anyone who would be in the best and truest sense a Christian must be in a real sense a mystic.

Mysticism is not confined to Christianity; it is no less extensive than religious experience generally; but the relation between the soul and Christ is a distinctive mystical experience; and it is specific in this sense, that this relation

works out in a certain practice of life and a certain development of character. It is this concrete effect of a true Christian mysticism which forms the subject of this book. Meanwhile, by way of illustration, I quote the following from the Life of the great Italian writer Fogazzaro:

"I was sitting at sunset on the grass near the cemetery at Oria, contemplating the blue and placid lake and the mountains beyond, all aflame with the glory of the sinking sun, and my heart was flooded with a profound sense of tenderness. All at once the thought came to me—sudden, vehement and clear—that in the objects around me in this lovely land I loved so well there dwelt a Spirit, a living Being, who understood me and loved me in return. I felt this presence so strongly that I could not possibly doubt its existence."

That was the experience of a peculiarly sensitive and imaginative child who was destined to become a great writer. But such an experience comes to every one who by faith in Christ is born of the Spirit. The immediacy and certitude are the same, and from that immediacy, that indisputable inrush of God into the soul, comes all the confidence and effectiveness of the religious life. It is in that way, so direct and unmistakable, that the soul abides in Christ and Christ abides in the soul, and Christ's presence and power are manifested in the world.

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BOOK I

THE RULE OF LIFE

CHAPTER I

THE RULE OF LIFE

We set ourselves, a small study circle, to find out what we, we of to-day, really believe, what our religion requires of us, what manner of people we ought to be, what kind of things we ought, in these difficult times, to do. The inquiry was pressing, because much that our fathers believed had become obsolete and incredible. And it was felt in many quarters that our society, nominally Christian, cannot possibly be according to the mind of the Master.

Such an inquiry would not be necessary for those who are in the Roman obedience. For them their Church decides on infallible authority what they must believe, and provides for them individually a priestly director who can give them guidance in detail. It is small wonder that many in the present upheaval of thought and life turn wistfully to that Authority and ask for that direction. Since the war a steady stream of converts has entered the Roman Church, and the leaders of the Catholic Truth Society are encouraged to believe that the days of Protestantism are numbered. But it is not always noticed that the leakage from the Roman Church balances the converts. Always there are drifting out, and falling away, those who have found the Authority not authentic and the direction disappointing. There are, besides, yet in the English-speaking world many millions of people who desire to be Christians but cannot be Catholics in the Roman sense. They have the history of the Papacy before them in Ludwig Pastor's *Geschichte der Päpste*, the work of a devout Catholic, or in the *History of the Popes*, written by a cool and impartial historian, Bishop Creighton. And though they value the tradition and the continuity,

and the ideal of one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, they cannot believe that the Papacy, as shown in its history, can be the intention of Christ. Since the Reformation it has rested principally on the Jesuit Order ; and that Society of Jesus, founded by Ignatius Loyola, criticised even in its early days by Pascal, and by now clearly revealed in its methods and results, seems to them very different from the example or the intention of Jesus.[1]

These millions of Protestants desire a Church, a Catholic Church. But the Roman Church, as it is seen in history, gives no promise of what they want. They desire a Society of Jesus, but it must be far other than that established by Loyola. The spiritual tyranny and intellectual degradation revealed by Count von Hoensbrœch cannot be the intention of Jesus. The Papal Church, supported by and largely governed by the Jesuit Order, offers no solution to the problem of our times, no refuge for the mind which needs religion, needs Christ, but needs also Truth.

But if the Authority of Catholicism, Roman or Anglican, is not possible for us, what other Authority can we accept ? In Protestantism as such there is no authority. It is divided, it is fissiparous. Its only authority is the authority of truth ; that authority which is common in a sense to all human systems and all human thought. Neither in Catholicism, as such, nor in Protestantism, as such, is the Authority we seek to be found. Of Catholicism even Count von Hoensbrœch says : " But the Catholic religion conceals, in spite of terrible human weaknesses—and in what creed are these lacking ?—forcible and profound elements of edification and civilisation ; they are held down and misused by the violation of their true nature through ultramontane Jesuit tyranny." [2]

Something of the same sort may be said of Protestantism ; it conceals, in spite of terrible human weaknesses, forcible and profound elements of edification and civilisation, but they are checked and largely neutralised by endless divisions, by sectarian prejudices and bitterness, and by the mental

[1] See the remarkable book, *Fourteen Years a Jesuit*, a record of personal experiences and a criticism, by Count Paul von Hoensbrœch, translated by Alice Zimmern. (Cassell & Co., Ltd.)

[2] Op. cit., vol. ii, p. 467.

narrowness and opinionatedness of the typical Protestant temper.

Those "forcible and profound elements of edification and civilisation" which lie concealed under the varying forms of Christianity, what are they? Can they be detected? Can they be freed from the tyrannies and the dogmatisms which have done so much to neutralise them?

That was essentially the subject of our inquiry. There is a Christianity which has produced all the good in these Christian centuries, not so much through, as in spite of, the formularies, dogmas, and institutions which have gathered about it and overlaid it. Can we recover that Christianity? Can we free it of its encumbrances? Can we liberate, in our own life and in the life of the world, its imprisoned forces?

At the time of the Reformation there was great hope in a recovered Bible. The book was not in the hands of the laity, nor was it much used by the clergy. When it started into new life through the genius of Luther, it seemed to offer all that was wanted, the unsullied truth, the plain rule of life. Tyndale's Bible, especially as it was embodied in the A.V. of 1611, a work of genius equal to Luther's, produced a similar effect. It became the vade-mecum of ordinary people, who carried it in their pockets, as Christian Scientists carry *Science and Health* about with them to-day. In those days of enthusiasm and hope the formula grew into shape: The Bible and the Bible alone, the religion of Protestants.

There was here a possibility which may yet be realised—indeed, must in a sense be realised, for Catholics and Protestants alike owe the knowledge of Christ to this book. But there has been a long period of disappointment and disillusion. The Reform began to split up, precisely on Bible grounds. Calvin differed from Luther and supported his new system by the Word of God. Zwingli differed from both, on the same ground. It became evident that the Bible and the Bible alone, in the hands of ignorant or semi-educated people, might produce endless sects, a possibility which developed in the course of the seventeenth century, until Protestant society was divided into innumer-

able contending factions, and controversial pamphlets filled the air like a snowstorm, making religion itself the ground of discord and antipathies; the notion that the assiduous reading and study of the wonderful book would show unmistakably what we were meant to be, and how we ought to act, had for a time to be surrendered. But in our time the hope of the Reformation has been renewed. The book, subjected to literary criticism and interpreted by the historic sense, regains and extends its power over men. The nature and origin of the documents are determined; the historic perspective is secured; the development, the widening dawn, of truth in Scripture is recognised, that truth itself bids us accept the Scriptures as truth.

It is, we may surmise, thus in a Bible at last understood and studied, and read with intelligent eyes, that we may eventually find the clear rules of life and the unquestionable Spiritual authority. Perhaps it was to this that Christ was pointing when He told His antagonists that they searched the Scriptures, for in them they thought they had eternal life, but they would not come to Him who had the life.[1] Hitherto the use of the Bible has been blind and unintelligent. In its use, more than in anything, "the letter killeth," only the Spirit gives life. But leaving for the moment the "Bible and the Bible alone" dogma, and its probable rediscovery in a more tenable form, we note how in our time new systems and new claims are springing up, new revelations, we might almost call them, as weeds always appear in the chinks of the temple steps when they are broken.

Mrs. Eddy, for example, rewrites the Bible in her own way. If the Bible is read in the Church of Christian Science, it is only to be interpreted, corrected and superseded by a reading from *Science and Health*. Mrs. Besant is still more wonderful; by her gift as an adept, she can dispense with the Bible as the vulgar have it and read the original, with its very startling variations from the *textus receptus*. The Mormons have a book which supersedes the Bible. In a word, if we are perplexed in our day to know what we are to believe and how we are to act, it is not for want

[1] John v. 39.

of proffered guidance from new and self-declared authorities; but rather it is due to the multitude and contradiction of these authorities. Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritualism, Mormonism are all equally confident, equally dogmatic, equally contemptuous of the Church, or the Churches, equally ready to guide us all in the right, though opposite, ways. But in face of competing claims and the colliding authorities, we have to determine how we ought to live, and what kind of characters we ought to form.

We are Christians. We start with a great tradition behind us, and with a vast, vague authority over us. We have not to look about for a religion or start afresh. Our difficulty comes from the immense elaboration, and the numberless divergences, of a great, implicitly accepted influence, which we know as Christianity. Can we not simplify? Can we not get to the fountain-head? Is there not a rule of life which we may identify behind all the elaborate and dogmatic systems which seem to compete for our allegiance? Yes, there is—a rule which is as amazing as it is simple, as infinite in its inward unfoldings as it is small and compassable in its immediate approach. The unfathomable and unsearchable and illimitable principle which is offered as the guide for all human life, and as the point of unity by which men, and even nations, may be finally brought together, is this simple precept:

BE CHRISTLIKE.

What is involved in that may be a subject for endless meditation, experiment and effort. How to realise it may involve searching inquiry, self-discipline, self-conflict. All the Catholic Church may grow out of it. Every divergence and variety of Christian dogma, or science, may find some justification as an attempt to realise the one ideal, to obey the one commandment. But the rule of life which we are seeking is one which is expressed in two words, one which has its full meaning for a child receiving his first impression of men and things; another and yet more specific meaning for the adolescent, approaching manhood or womanhood; a perfectly definite meaning for those

choosing their career: a deeper meaning when the top of the hill is reached and the steps begin to decline; a unique meaning in the shadow of death; a meaning the height and breadth and fullness of which will only be understood in that deathless life beyond death to which the precept itself leads. All is contained and implicit, ready for endless unfoldings, in this one Law: Be Christlike.

Lecky, who wrote the history of European morals, and whose own map of life at the close of his days gave us a remarkable insight into his own intellectual position—an observer of Christianity rather than a Christian, a detached, philosophic mind marking the phases and successions of human life rather than a consciously religious man—made once a remark about Christ which, coming from a believer, would not be very striking, but coming from Lecky is very illuminating. He showed what a remarkable possession Christianity has in the person of its Founder.

There is a character, sufficiently presented to posterity in the four Gospels, which has a unique power of arresting and interesting mankind. Other religions possess honoured names. Confucius and Lao-Tze, the Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed, but they are teachers, masters, lawgivers. They do not say to their followers "be like me."

Some of these great founders and teachers of religions might refrain from such a command out of modesty, some out of pride. Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius would be too modest to commend themselves as examples. Mohammed would put himself in too isolated a position as the Prophet of God to expect others to be like him; and it would not occur to a Moslem to define his religion as likeness to Mohammed. Buddha, in his supreme renunciation, was an example to follow, in a sense, and numberless other Buddhas, or Bodhisattvas, have followed him, and their images crowd the Buddhist temples, calm, expressionless, immobile, those who like the first Buddha have conquered the lust of life and entered Nirvâna. But if all men were to become like Buddha, human life would cease; it is his surrender of life and depreciation of life, his yearning to be lost in the unconsciousness of the whole, that is presented for imitation. But Christ came that men might have life

and might have it more abundantly. And His own character and personality, His mode of thought, His course of action, as well as His formal teaching, so far as He gave formal teaching, in a word, His full-length portrait, in the artless and apparently formless and casual accounts of the four Gospels, gives to men a kind of universal example of what they ought to be. It is this Person, this life, which is the distinctive possession of Christianity. A Christian is a Christlike person. A Christian Society is one which is aiming at Christlikeness. A Church is an organisation for producing Christlikeness in individuals, for making society, the nation, the nations, the world, Christlike.

Therefore, whatever may have to be said in explanation and application, we have here a word which is the key to everything and the rule for all. In a general way it is understood at once, though in fullness of detail it may take a lifetime to learn, and has already taken many centuries for the world as a society to grasp. But everyone who has heard the name of Christ—Chinese and Hindus, as well as those who were born in a Christian community—will immediately get a definite idea, and will be set on a definite inquiry, by this plain precept. The object of human life is to be Christlike. The hope of the world lies in this, that Christ has been shown to the world as the example of what men ought to be, and remains in the world producing that likeness, and gathering together in one, for a world transformation, those who have that likeness, or desire to have it, those in whom the desire to have it and to transmit it to the rest has become the master-thought of life.

All at once a marvellous simplicity appears. All we want is to be Christlike.

CHAPTER II

IMITATIO CHRISTI

THE first to put into English any part of Thomas à Kempis' work was Margaret, the mother of King Henry VII. She translated from the French the fourth book of the *Imitatio Christi.* The title, in modern spelling, runs: "Here begin-neth the fourth book of the following of Jesus Christ and of the contemning of the world. Imprinted at the com-mandment of the most excellent princess Margaret, mother unto our sovereign lord king Henry the VII, countess of Richmond and Derby. And by the same princess it was translated out of French into English in form and manner ensuing: the year of our Lord God, 1504." The following year the remaining three books appeared by the order, but not as the work, of the same princess. She was a remarkable woman, a student and lover of books, and still more a lover of goodness. She had absorbed the spirit of the book which she was the first to give to English readers, as Bishop Fisher's funeral oration shows: "She was bounteous and liberal to every person of her knowledge and acquaintance. Avarice and covetousness she most hated, and sorrowed it full much in all persons, but specially in any that belonged unto her. She was of singular easiness to be spoken unto, and full courteous answer she would make to all that came unto her. Of marvellous gentleness she was unto all folks, but specially unto her own, whom she trusted and loved right tenderly. Unkind she would not be unto any creature, nor forgetful of any service done to her before, which is no little part of very nobleness. She was not vengeable, nor cruel, but ready anon to forget and to forgive injuries done unto her, at the least desire or motion made unto her for the same. Merciful, also

piteous, she was unto such as was grieved and wrongfully troubled, and to them that were in poverty or sickness or any other misery. She was of singular wisdom, far surpassing the common rate of women. She was good in remembrance, and of holding memory; a ready wit she had also, to conceive all things, albeit they were right dark. Right studious she was in books, which she had in great number, both in English, and in Latin, and in French; and for her exercise and for the profit of others, she did translate divers matters of devotion out of the French into English. In favours, in words, in gesture, in every demeanour of herself, so great nobleness did appear, that what she spake or did, it marvellously became her. She had in a manner all that was praiseable in a woman, either in soul or body." [1]

Thus was the *Imitatio Christi* first given to the English by a noble lady who was in herself a good illustration of the work.

Richard Whytford's translation in the beautiful English of the sixteenth century, the English essentially of Tyndale and of Hooker, coming out of the fiery period of the Marian persecutions—the first edition appeared in 1556—cannot be bettered for charm and dignity. It is even somewhat of a misfortune to know the *Imitatio* first in the more modern attempts, such as that of Canon Liddon, to secure a greater exactness and to bring it more into harmony with our modern phraseology. It is better to be reminded even by the form and style that this work comes from the end of the Middle Ages and precedes the Reformation.

But since 1504, for now more than four hundred years, this book from the hand of Thomas à Kempis—it is not worth discussing whether it is rightly attributed to him for apart from it Thomas à Kempis would not be known, and the name is for everyone now synonymous with the *Imitatio Christi*—has worked, who shall say how incalculably, in the souls of men. It is in the closet of all who think and yearn after spiritual realities. The Bible, Bunyan's

[1] See introduction of Wilfrid Raynal, D.S.B., to Richard Whytford's translation of the *Imitatio*, p. xi. (Published by Chatto & Windus, MCMVII.)

Pilgrim and the *Imitatio*, are the three books of religion which may be called universal, holding their own from generation to generation, exercising their spell over minds of the most various orders.

This book is always at work in the innermost, not quoted so much as the Bible or the *Pilgrim*, because it is in a way *too* intimate to quote. To quote it is to reveal too alarmingly the passages of the soul in its intercourse with God, which are to be sought by each soul separately, but not to be generalised or vulgarised. It is the typical book of devotion of the Roman Church ; and yet it makes its sure and immediate appeal to all Protestants. John Wesley took great pains to put it into the hands of his followers ; and to this day it is read as much by Nonconformists as by Conformists. With it in their hands and hearts, men forget the controversies which divide Christians ; only one controversy remains, viz. the controversy with the obtrusive self : only one aim prevails, to get personally and consciously into contact and communion with Christ. *Imitatio Christi* never seems quite the right description of the work. It should be *Commixtio Christi*. It represents the secret, inward, unflagging, passionate effort to reach the apostle Paul's standard : " It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me."

But strange to say this book makes its appeal to those who would repudiate the name of Christian. George Eliot dropped Christianity. In company with George Henry Lewes she encamped in the *terra incognita* of Agnosticism, and looked on Palestine, and the Sinless Life lived there, and the Cross and the Resurrection, as only the beautiful myths of a past religion. But the *Imitatio* she did not drop. Its soul-searching power remained, though the Jesus of whom it speaks, and who in so many passages speaks through it, was gone as a living reality. There must be something absolutely universal and essentially human in a book written about the following of Christ which retains its power to influence and to guide when the faith in Christ has gone.

The truth is that the *Imitatio* is the revelation of the naked human spirit, in the discovery of the transitoriness

and unreality of the world, reaching out after that which is not transitory but real and lasting. Reaching out after it, and finding it in a complete surrender of self, finding the true rest and joy in renunciation, "l'ineffable joie du renoncement de la joie," as Renan called it. This complete self-giving and self-losing is connected with words and commands of Jesus; it is an imitation of Christ in so far as Christ found His joy in complete self-giving. But it is not distinctively Christian: it is the way of the mystic in all ages and all religions. It therefore appeals to those who are not Christian, as the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius or the experiences of Al-Ghazzali do. George Eliot is more at home with the *Imitatio Christi* than she would be with the Christ who is to be imitated.

For here we come upon the strange paradox that the *Imitatio Christi*, for all its penetrating power and inexhaustible influence on the human soul, though it is a work of devotion with which men will never be willing to dispense, and though it is an unfailing contributory force to a Christian life, is not really in any full sense an Imitation of Christ. It is one-sided; it is ascetic; it leads to the cloister; it is totally unconcerned with the salvation of the world; it has no missionary outlook. And, stranger still, the fourth book, Concerning the Sacrament, presents a curious inconsistency with the first three books. Those first three books—Admonitions Useful for a Spiritual Life, Admonitions tending to Internal Things, and Of Internal Consolation—already show, apart from the sacrament, all the interior communion with God, and the reception of Christ which the sacrament alone, in the fourth book, is supposed to give.

The imitation, then, of Christ is only partial. The Christlikeness it would produce is not a likeness of Jesus as He appears to us in the Gospels, still less is it a likeness to Christ as we conceive Him before and after the days of His flesh. The Jesus of the Gospels was not ascetic; it is the most remarkable feature of His life and conduct that He turned away from the accredited ascetic practices which approved themselves to the forerunner, John, to the Essenes and even to the Pharisees. There is nothing in Him

to suggest the life of the cloister; He is always out in the open, not in a cell, among men, not among recluses; living the life of men, eating and drinking with them, not inclined to depreciate or to repudiate the ordinary life of the home or of the workshop. Religion for Him is not a department of life, to be painfully and exclusively pursued; it is life itself in all its rich varieties of toil and achievement, of seeking and finding, of suffering and bearing. Whatever, therefore, the cloistral life may be, whatever charms or consolations or values it may have for certain types of men or in certain conditions of society, it certainly cannot be called the Imitation of Christ. If Christ would have men go into their closet and shut the door in order that they may commune with their Father who seeth in secret, that is only a preparation for going out into the world and preaching the gospel to every creature. Thomas à Kempis enjoins privacy, silence, self-repression. Christ, by example and by express mandates, bids everyone to be a man among men, to speak out the truth that is in him. "He opened His mouth" is one of the characteristic expressions concerning Him. His thought is not self-repression, but rather "Give thyself royally," as Carlyle said in a parting message to Tyndall. The reader of the *Imitatio*, confining himself to that book as the interpretation of Christ, and as the guide to what a Christian ought to be and was called upon to do, would miss, after all, the most distinctive feature of Christ, and therefore the most important element of Christ-likeness, viz. that Christ was all the time engaged in saving the world, saving individuals by works of mercy and words of teaching, but saving mankind as a whole by His life among men, and His deliberately incurred death.

It is, then, an *Imitatio Christi* that we are in search of. But we may not be arrested in our search by this book which bears the name. The Christlikeness that we want to-day for the salvation of the world is not to be obtained along the lines of mediæval monasticism. The Christ whom we would see, that we may follow Him, will not be seen through "storied windows richly dight, casting a dim religious light." Look, He is out on the lake, on the mount, by the roadside, and on Calvary.

CHAPTER III

THE EXAMPLE

For a century and more the four Gospels have been subjected to a searching study and minute criticism such as no other documents in human literature have ever been called upon to endure. As they were written by very humble men in an uncritical age, in a distant land, and many centuries ago, there can be no wonder if many things in them are shown up and rendered doubtful in such an unsparing inquiry. But the wonder is that out of the furnace of criticism they always come uninjured in this sense, that they still present unmistakably the portrait of that unique Person whose life and words and deeds they attempted to preserve for posterity.

Strauss was the first who impressed the whole world, beyond the narrow circles of theology and ecclesiasticism, with an ingenious theory about the Gospels. In his *Leben Jesu* he showed to Germany, and then to Europe, that the stories about Jesus were the product of the mythopœic tendency in religion. That is to say, they were only tales, unconsciously invented, as myths are invented in the course of generations. All the world was struck by this theory, and the historicity of the Gospels was shattered, until some one asked, But does not a myth take time to grow, and was there sufficient time between the life of Jesus in the time of Tiberius and the composition of the Gospels in the time of Tacitus? Baur and his school tried to make time by bringing the Gospels down into the second century, and explaining them as the outcome of certain tendencies Jewish and anti-Jewish in the early Church.

Since then the Gospels have been searched more minutely still, and resolved unto documents—the Ur-Marcus, the

Matthean *Logia*; the triple-tradition of the Synoptics has been placed and replaced, arranged and rearranged; the Fourth Gospel has been taken from John and given to another John; treated as wholly unhistorical, vindicated as containing a thread of historic truth on which discourses of the Master are hung; ascribed to early neo-Platonist influences; made the origin of sacramentarian doctrine, as formerly it was regarded as the strongest argument against sacraments; and so on. Early in this century Albert Schweitzer astonished the world, and Professor Sanday conveyed the shock to English readers, by an account of all the researches made in the Gospels, from Reimarus to Wrede, in quest of the historical Jesus. He himself supported the view that the real Jesus was an enthusiast who proclaimed a coming world-catastrophe, an abrupt supernatural termination to the whole present order of things, in which He Himself, the Son of Man, would appear in glory as judge and ruler. According to this view Jesus was not a teacher but an announcer. So far as He gave His disciples rules for conduct, these were not intended to embody general ethical principles, but to point out the kind of conduct appropriate during the little time still left before the present order passed away. In Schweitzer's phrase, they formed only an *Interim-ethik*. Of course, the anticipation was not fulfilled. Jesus appeared as an enthusiast on fire with visions which proved illusory.

Other critics and writers have seen their way to disprove the historic reality of Jesus altogether. There never was a historic person or event of the kind described in the Gospels. The whole is a fiction created to embody a teaching. Meanwhile there have been those who, like Charles Voysey, without denying the reality of Jesus, discredited and repudiated His ethical teaching; and last of all Nietzsche threw himself heart and soul against what was regarded as the distinctive and most powerful part of the teaching, that embodied in the Beatitudes. Nietzsche was convinced that Christianity had been the hindrance to human progress by insisting on the virtues of humility, meekness, forgiveness, love and self-denial. A true morality would make everyone try to assert himself in order to become a superman.

Nietzsche's superman, however, raised to national dimensions in pre-war Germany, gave the world a shock from which it has not yet recovered. And this latest criticism of Jesus in the Gospels, viewed in the light of events, has probably, by way of reaction, turned men's minds back to Jesus with a new desire and yearning.

But though this activity and variety of criticism may have shaken the implicit faith in the Gospels and in Jesus, which existed before Reimarus, and even before Strauss, it has not affected the person and character of Jesus as much as would have been expected. The reason is twofold. In the first place, these drastic criticisms always prove on inquiry to be the result of a *parti pris*. The critic, consciously or unconsciously, approaches the investigation of the Gospels with his mind made up; he sees in the Gospels all that supports his theory; what tells against it, he does not notice. This is the special infirmity of the German mind, and the drastic criticism of the Gospels has all along come from that land of the *à priori*, and of the superman.

Thus Schmiedel set out to find the historic Jesus by the singular and ingenious method of taking as undoubtedly genuine the few passages which showed that Jesus was fallible and wholly human. These, he argued, would not have been invented by writers who were bent on proving Him divine. These, then, were the boulders of truth which survived in the flood of supernatural invention. But what kind of a seeker for truth is this who, convinced that the whole narrative is a fiction, determines to accept as the foundation only what seems out of harmony with the whole? This fatal subjectivism, this habit of *petitio principii*, not unknown to us, but absolutely germane to the German mind, has rendered us very suspicious of these theories. The Jesus of history is only to be discovered by those who have an open mind and are ready to recognise that He was not an ordinary man; for His effect on men, and lasting influence on the world, which form the reason why we are eager to find out what He was, negative the supposition that He was an ordinary man, raised to a peculiar position by pious credulity, by legends and intentional myths.

But, in the second place, the criticism of the Gospels

fails to shake the practical faith of Christians, and the influence of the narratives as they come into the hands of new peoples, or even of those who have not paid much attention to them before, because Jesus is brought to the reader of the Gospels by the Spirit. Jesus Himself draws near. The details of the description do not seem to be vital. Some may be misconceived or misreported. But He Himself is sufficiently clear; it is He, a spiritual reality, and not the record of His words or deeds, which brings the conviction.

Just as, when we first meet a man, we may note the irregularities of his features, the oddities of his manner, the carelessness of his dress, but when he begins to discourse we are absorbed by the mind and by the personality, and absolutely forget those details which might have marred, but could not alter essentially, the man himself; so the details of the Gospel narratives, the flaws, the inconsistencies, the stumbling-blocks, which to the minute critic appear important and significant, absolutely disappear in the impression of that Personality, the unearthliness, the profound insight, the sense of a spiritual world, conveyed by the whole artless picture. "Do not show me the crucifix," said Raymond Lull, the schoolman and missionary of the thirteenth century, the contemporary of St. Francis; "it is when I read what Jesus said and did that my heart is warmed and my eyes fill with tears."

This is the fact of religion which so easily escapes the critic. Seldom does the critic attempt to correct his conclusions by bringing in this fact, which yet must be known to him, if he has read the lives of Christians in the past or been allowed to know Christians among his contemporaries. A fly traversing the canvas of Raphael's Madonna at Dresden might know more of the paint and the uneven surface than any of the crowd standing entranced before it; but what could the fly know of the picture? On the other hand, a sympathetic observer, carried away by the surprising beauty of the composition and of the colours, would not notice any defects in the canvas, nor even any minor mistakes in the drawing. The critic is necessarily myopic; but the myopic judgment does not affect the appreciation of those who have normal vision. Swift, in his mordant

way, describes how Gulliver, in the hands of his gigantic young mistress among the Brobdingnagians, saw with a painful distinctness the great pits and creases and discolorations in her fair skin. The most beautiful human figure would be destroyed by microscopic investigation. And for religion these minutiæ which occupy the critic are of very secondary importance. All that matters is that these Gospel stories bring us face to face with a Person. And from the earliest days that Person remained a living, bright reality: "whom not having seen ye love," as that early epistle of Peter's says, "on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."[1] This was in the first century; but is it not the same in the nineteenth, when Ray Palmer describes his own experience:—

Jesus, these eyes have never seen
That radiant form of Thine,
The veil of sense hangs dark between
Thy blessed face and mine.

I see Thee not, I hear Thee not,
Yet art Thou oft with me;
And earth has ne'er so dear a spot
As where I meet with Thee.

Like some bright dream, which comes unsought,
When slumbers o'er me roll,
Thine image ever fills my thought
And charms my ravished soul.

Yea, though I cannot see and still
Must rest in faith alone,
I love Thee, dearest Lord, and will,
Unseen, but not unknown.

When death these mortal eyes shall seal,
And still this throbbing heart,
The rending veil shall Thee reveal,
All glorious as Thou art.

Was it not exactly the same when Phillips Brooks was overheard by a passenger, passing by his state room in

[1] 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.

the Atlantic liner, in prayer: "Jesus, Thou hast filled my life with joy and peace; and to look into Thy face is earth's most exquisite delight"?

The criticism of the Gospels leaves the Gospels unaffected for the remarkable reason that the Person of whom they tell us is, as they report Him to have said, "in the midst, when two or three are gathered in His name"—the Vine bearing fruit through its branches, and "with us all the days, even unto the end of the world."

And so Albert Schweitzer, who seemed in his book to insist that the Jesus of apocalyptic was the true Jesus, and that He was deluded in His expectation and promise, was so conscious of the mysterious force that lies in the secrets of His personality, that he closed his book with these words:—

"He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lake-side, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is."

That is a very remarkable conclusion to the book which is translated into English as *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*.[1] But the practical sequel is even more remarkable. The *Times* in February 1922 contained this piece of news: "Suddenly in 1913 the circles in England which had been discussing Schweitzer were astonished to learn that this revolutionary New Testament critic was going to the wilds of French Equatorial Africa as the agent of a Missionary Society. In that manner had Schweitzer heard and obeyed the voice which said: 'Follow thou me!' For the purpose of his work among savages he had to make himself proficient in a new capacity—the medical. By giving organ recitals he had procured the means of his training as a doctor. Then he quitted Europe for the African forests. For four and a half years, while his native country was

[1] Published by A. & C. Black.

being won back by France from Germany in the Great War, Schweitzer fought leprosy and sleeping sickness in the little forest post of the Paris Evangelical Mission on the the river Ogowe. He embodied his experiences in a book, the English translation of which was entitled *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest.*"

To such remarkable and practical results did the Jesus of the Gospels lead the student and the critic. So distinctly did He speak; so authoritative was His voice. Here again Christ produces Christlikeness. His image, nay He Himself, steps out of the Gospels, just at the moment when the student seems to be questioning, doubting and discrediting Him. "Follow thou me," He says. That is the upshot of the whole narrative. And Albert Schweitzer followed.

What clearer proof could be given of the reality and the influence of the Person in the Gospels, and of the powerlessness of criticism and denial to prevent the mission on which He came into the world?

CHAPTER IV

FOR OTHERS

When we speak of being Christlike, we are inclined to take far too limited a view of what Christ was like. In popular language the term means chiefly gentleness, patience, readiness to forgive. It is the "gentle Jesus, meek and mild," of our childhood that is set before us for imitation. Or possibly attention fixes on Christ's complete triumph over the sins of the flesh, and Christlikeness stands for purity. And that is a most valuable interpretation; "everyone that has the hope set on *him* purifies himself even as he is pure."[1] But these particular phases and characteristics hardly bring out what is most distinctive of Christ, and therefore they leave the idea of Christlikeness partial and fragmentary.

The most distinctive fact about Christ, that which sets Him in a place apart and supreme as the object of our admiration and imitation, is that He gave Himself without reserve and without cessation to the service of others. Men are all egoists; He was completely an altruist. This is distinctive; this is what characterises Him. No other person known to us in life or in history conveys this impression with such clean, sheer, absolute, unrestricted force. We find no instance, no suggestion, of His ever considering even for a moment His own welfare, gain, pleasure, comfort or life. Gifted with powers and resources which He put freely at the disposal of others, He would not use them for Himself. He would feed a hungry crowd, but He would not relieve His own hunger after His long fast by producing bread in the wilderness. Concern for Himself never for a moment raises its head. He asked from His followers

[1] 1 John iii. 3.

love and obedience, because in obedience lay their salvation and in love their joy; but this was all that He ever asked from men. From first to last His life was one steady and undeviating service to men. He was healing, or teaching, and finally suffering for men, all through. He had constant interviews with men and women; but He was engaged in giving to them, not in getting from them. If He asked for a drink of water from the well, it was not so much to slake His thirst as to offer to the woman who gave it the Water of Life. If He demanded the use of an ass to ride into Jerusalem, it was not to save Himself the toil of walking, but only to show that He was the one of whom the prophet Zechariah had written: "Behold thy king cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass." [1] Once He cried in anguish "I thirst," but it was not a complaint, nor a demand; it was but one of the indications of the agony through which He was passing in the fulfilment of His self-chosen task, the salvation of men.

So marvellous and unbroken was this self-giving for others, that when the records of His life came to be written, the eyes of piety and faith saw Him coming into the world, as from another, with a preconceived plan to accomplish a work, to give Himself for the life of all. That was the language He Himself had used. He had come because He was sent by another; He was there to do the will of Him that sent Him. He came, so He said, not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. This, then, is the fundamental fact which constitutes Christ-likeness; the fact which sets Christ in a place apart among the sons of men, the fact which constitutes the meaning and force of His commandment: "Follow thou me." This is what He would have men do; He would have them like Himself in the sense that they should live for others, that they should conceive themselves as sent into life to serve the rest, that they should do this at all costs, even to the sacrifice of self and life. "Take up your cross and follow me" is the call of Christlikeness.

It would seem, then, that the first principle of Christian

[1] Zech. ix. 9.

education would be to inculcate this fundamental element of Christlikeness. The child from the beginning is to learn that as Christ was in the world, so is he, or she, in the world, to seek not his or her own good, but the good of all. And this is the Montessorian principle of transferring the attention from itself to its environment from the very first. Left to ourselves, we easily fall into the bad habit of attending to ourselves rather than to things or people outside us. And the habit once formed is very hard to break; if it is confirmed by precept and example from our earliest days, it establishes a tyrannical power over us, and is our ruin and the world's curse. This is, indeed, the original sin which has to be overcome. It is, in the language of Scripture, the sin of Adam: it is overcome by the second Adam in the Cross. "We may say," says a recent writer, "that we fulfil the law of our being, and live according to our own perhaps unconscious desire, only when our attention is given not to ourselves, but to external reality. It is not merely a question of morals, though it can be expressed morally; it is a question of general well-being. Life itself means a full contact with external reality, in the form not merely of sensation or even perception, but also of interest and sympathy; and life is lessened in us the moment we begin to think of ourselves selfishly, egotistically or hypochondriacally. All this mortifying and suppressing is only a wrong technique which increases the trouble of the self. It is evil where driven into itself, when it loses contact with external reality, just as the body becomes evil when it is not fed; and it becomes evil, like the body, because it is starved. Self-consciousness, egotism, is but a symptom of that starvation; the egotist really is not passionately interested in himself; he is, for whatever reason, unable to take that passionate interest in the not-self which is the necessary condition of health, physical and mental. Children often seem to be extreme egotists, because they have not learned a technique of contact with the not-self. That technique does not come to most of us by nature, but needs to be learned, and education really is the teaching of it." [1]

[1] *Times Educational Supplement*, March 1922.

It is a gain no doubt that this truth should be philosophically grasped and stated. But it is so involved in the very person and life of Christ, that it comes home to children by way of a great Exemplar; and so far as education has been richly and fully Christian, lives have been formed on this principle of self-forgetting, of living for others, of sacrificing everything, even life itself, for the common good.

We are more Christian than we know, because the truth of Christ is really enforced by the facts of life, and especially by the disastrous consequences of ignoring it. Education, therefore, is the discipline and process by which the original sin is redeemed, and the egotist that is born into the world with every fresh personality is transformed into the altruist, who forgets himself entirely in the service of the rest.

If it is the main object of the teacher to make the child unselfish, to point out from the beginning, and in every connection, that we never find ourselves except by losing ourselves, to exercise the thought and interest in the direction of doing everything for others, for the good of the whole, children can be as easily trained in this large, true thought as they are in the narrow nationalism and misguided patriotism which has been the great curse of the world for half a century.

It is the contention of the greatest book on education which has been given to the world in these times,[1] that the Christian hypothesis is necessary. A world interest must come at the beginning; and that dominant interest must shape and co-ordinate the rest. Dr. Garnett quotes the words of Frederic Harrison, which are very striking as the outcome of fifty years of strenuous life and thought: "All our mighty achievements are being hampered and often neutralised, all our difficulties are being doubled, and all our moral and social diseases are being aggravated by this supreme and dominant fact—that we have suffered our religion to slide from us and that in effect our age has no abiding faith in any religion at all. The urgent task of our time is to recover a religious faith as a basis of life both personal and social."

[1] *Education and World Citizenship*, Maxwell Garnett, p. 296.

Well, we are recovering a religious faith, as we open our eyes and get rid of the dogmatic scales. We make the discovery that Christ is the revelation to man in the field of history, and also in the forum of thought, that the only way of life is the way that He trod, the path of complete self-giving, self-filling, let us say, only to give. This *is* religion; God is the principle of self-giving for the good of the whole; our religion is to be imitators of God, in the complete and constant and unflinching giving of ourselves for all, not seeking our own, but the good of others.

Irreligious education must always fail; but education called religious may equally fail—*corruptio optim ipessima*—unless it makes Christlikeness its aim, and not a merely secondary thought, and unless it brings out plainly that Christlikeness is the escape from egotism, that Christ's whole purpose is to turn the attention from self to others, that that is the conversion or regeneration which He demands and produces. If education saves boys and girls from being egotists and leads them to serve the whole community with unselfish zeal and enthusiasm, it has succeeded: if it only trains the child's faculties to achieve selfish ends, and spurs the child's ambition to excel for his own benefit or happiness, it fails; in that way even "divine Philosophy may push beyond her mark and be Procuress to the lords of Hell."

It is the social good which is to be set before children as the goal, and taught to children in all their relations with one another and with their elders. That may be taught, under supervision, by child republics and self-government. What they need to learn, not only as the wisdom of later life, but so soon as life dawns and begins its slow development, is that self-seeking is in the long run misery, and self-giving is the only joy. To serve the commonwealth, though it be only the little commonwealth of the school, is the highest honour, to sacrifice for it is glory, and the liturgy which constitutes worship is only service.[1]

[1] Liturgy is only the English form of the Greek *λειτουργία*, which was the voluntary service rendered to the State in Athens by her rich citizens without fee or reward.

On the other hand, all our troubles in the world to-day are fundamentally connected with the neglect of this law. We train our children with the idea, or at least we neglect to combat the idea which comes so easily to them, that they are here in the world, not to serve the rest, or help the world as a whole, but to grab as much as they can for themselves, to exploit their fellowmen (if they can), to support their interests and pleasures, or to increase their wealth, and to use others only to exalt their fame and to magnify their greatness.

It is the false aim set before us from childhood, in home and school, that is responsible for our acquisitive society, our competition, rivalries, quarrels, wars, and consequent anarchy and crime.

Our salvation would lie in Christlikeness, in that fundamental characteristic of Christ, taught and adopted and practised as the absolute rule of life: We are here not to please ourselves, but to help the world; not to get on, but to get the world on; not to reap a harvest of wealth or honours for ourselves, but to enlarge the wealth of all humanity, to honour what Comte called the *Grand'être*, the sum total of our kind.

But if this rule of life determines what education should be, it also offers to the young a needed guidance when they are choosing and shaping their careers.

When children are properly trained, in the home and in the school, they instinctively choose their calling with a view to render service to the community. The natural egotism has been corrected, and they recognise that the only self worth considering is the self in its proper relation to the other selves, not the self asserted and maintained against them. "How can I be useful to the world?" is the natural question for a boy or girl to put, if only the teaching has been right. "I have such and such tastes, interests, abilities, inherited characteristics; to use them for my own pleasure or gain is low, anti-social, unchristlike; to use them for the good of all, to keep and train and develop them, that I may render the best service possible to my age, is the only object worth living for." That is a notion which will come quite naturally and irresistibly

to those whose nurture and culture have been properly directed.

The noble motto of a Prince, *Ich dien*, might be made the motto of every human being. The Son of Man is among you as one that serves.

The special and unique service which Christ rendered to humanity is beyond us; but the complete devotion to the service of humanity, and the steady resolve to live for others, is the imitable element of His life. Functions differ, capacities differ; the one constant in a crowd of variants is that each life can be a deliberate, conscious and concentrated contribution to the whole. Naturally we work to get a living, and decline work if a living comes to us without it. That motive is the undeveloped and uncorrected direction of our egoism; it is the plea of the once-born; for the twice-born it yields to another, which may quickly be far stronger, and indeed dominant, viz., to work for the good of the race, to give whatever I am and can do to the body of humanity from which I spring, and to which I owe myself.

Now, it is theoretically the distinction of the professions that professional men put their service first, and do not conceive their work as a means of earning a living, but as a means of helping and benefiting mankind. Some are in the service of health, some in the service of justice, some in the service of beauty, some in the service of education, some in the service of religion. But for them it is the service not the wage that matters. This is what makes professional life higher than business life—the avowed intention of doing a benefit for men without thought of reward. In business, convention allows men to make money—convention is blind, as we shall presently see—it does not blame a man in business if he avows that he is, according to the execrable phrase of the time, "out" to pile up a fortune for himself. But for the professions there is another and a higher standard. A doctor is bent on healing and preventing disease, on discovering the causes and removing from society the habits and practices which injure health. His discoveries belong to all; his successes are passed on. Pasteur once announced to his students his delight that

he and Koch, French and German, were engaged on a common pursuit of the cure of a certain disease. Here the hostile peoples were united on the neutral field of medical science. But shortly after he broke out in indignation before his students; Koch was proposing to keep his secret for personal gain instead of publishing it for the benefit of all. This was unprofessional; it was a stain on the high claim of the medical man to be a public servant. A lawyer is the guardian of justice; he is trying to secure right for his client—for the whole community: the barrister claims no payment, in theory he offers his services to maintain the cause of his fellow-man; his pay is only an honorarium; he cannot recover it in law. The judge sits on the bench above all the temptations of personal gain; to accept a bribe is his shame and downfall. The artist gives his life to the service of beauty. It is a God-given function; it is an aspect of God that he is engaged in revealing. He will study nature; he will make his sketches, paint his pictures, carve his marble, invent his designs, for the sheer love of it. His joy is in the product of his artistic spirit, not in the purchase-money of his wares. Robert Louis Stevenson, who was supremely the artist, said he could forgo everything except his art. He could imagine living without his wife, much as he loved her; but without his pen and his toil on the chiselling and polishing of language—no! And it is to be noted that when an artist begins to seek personal gain by his work, as Millais, driven by the demands of a wife, sought only to get large sums for his pictures, his art declines and may easily vanish altogether.

As for the profession of the ministry, simony is the master sin. Whenever a man enters this work for a living, or carries it on with a view to personal gain, he ruins both the work and himself.

That the professions admit the base motive of gain, and even become notorious for the exactions of greed and the piles of avarice, cannot be denied. Poor human nature often sinks lowest when it has aimed highest. But it is well to remind ourselves what a profession means. And then it is equally well to maintain that a business, every business, may be and ought to be actuated by the same

motive. The handicraft is Christlike when the workman has forgotten his wages and is bent on making the thing in hand as serviceable and efficient as possible. How tenderly Carlyle looked at the bridge over the river which his father, the mason, had made! There was solid and useful work serving not one but many generations. Honest handicraft is Christlike, and all craftsmen might more easily be Christians than the rest of mankind. But trade is equally good, so long as the trader realises that his business is service to the community. He obtains and distributes commodities; his concern is that they should be good, what they profess to be, of real use to the purchaser. There is a strange passage in the Jewish wisdom book of *Ecclesiasticus* which condemns trade as necessarily degrading.[1]

> A merchant shall hardly keep himself from wrongdoing;
> And a huckster shall not be acquitted of sin.
> Many have sinned for a thing indifferent;
> And he that seeketh to multiply gain will turn his eye away.
> A nail will stick fast between the joining of stones;
> And sin will thrust itself in between buying and selling.
> Unless a man hold on diligently in the fear of the Lord,
> His house shall soon be overthrown.

This is apocryphal rather than Christian, unless the closing verse may be said to save the situation. Christ-likeness in trade will be its redemption, and every transaction may be of service to buyer and seller alike.

And so with the larger transactions which form the bulk of modern commerce, and the financial operations by which they are supported. These may be Christlike; and they are saved from their intrinsic perils when that motive is kept in mind as the ruling principle.

Thus in all legitimate occupations, from kingship or the woolsack to the sweeping of the streets or the patching of clothes, men and women may be acting on the principle of Christ.

> A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgery divine;
> Who sweeps a room as for His laws
> Makes that and the action fine.

[1] Ecclus. xxvi. 9; xxvii. 3.

But the great principle would rule out the illegitimate occupations, and would save the boys and girls from entering upon them. Since the test is, Can I in this calling serve and help the community, or is it only a way of getting money for myself without benefiting the rest? a good many occupations would go. Grant that to amuse men is a service, to offer recreation and refreshment in the toil of life is even a high service, and such service can be offered by the purveyor of amusement and recreation, for Christ's sake and in Christ's name; there are obviously forms of amusement and whole fields of so-called recreation which Christ could never sanction and those who wish to be Christ-like may never enter.

But before closing this chapter, will the reader reflect how great is the suffering and loss inflicted on society by allowing the egoistic principle to prevail in education and in determining the walk in life, and how we are missing the mark in the world still because Christ's master principle, that we must live for others and not for ourselves, is left unstated altogether, or so insufficiently enforced that a great proportion of people even in a Christian community are, in Dante's terrific phrase, "not for God, or for others, but for themselves alone"? Such haunt the gates of Hell in the other world, and block the way of progress in this. "We are selfish men," sighed Wordsworth. A century has passed, and we are selfish men still.

Lord Bryce, in his latest book,[1] enumerated the several kinds of interest which the average man feels in the various branches of his individual life; and he places them in the following order:—

1. The occupation by which he makes his living, which is a prime necessity.
2. Domestic concerns, family, relatives and friends.
3. (Now only in some countries) his religious beliefs and observances.
4. His amusements and personal tastes for enjoyments, sensual or intellectual.
5. His civic duty to the community.

[1] *Modern Democracies*, ii, 600.

Some put the fourth above the second ; some so neglect the first as to be a burden to the community. The one common feature is the low place which belongs to the fifth, which for more than half the citizens in some countries scarcely exists at all.

The justice of this estimate will hardly be disputed. Lord Bryce was, perhaps, the wisest, shrewdest, and most high-minded observer of modern life in the years before and after 1900. He saw life steadily and saw it whole. His complaint was that the fifth interest came so low ; and unless its place can be altered democracy will fail, as the feudal system failed, as kaisership and supermen have failed. And how is this relative scale of human interests to be changed ?

Introduce into it the master principle of Christlikeness, and do not all the elements begin to rearrange themselves ; do not the particles crystallise in a new shape, the Christ-like ?

First comes the religious belief : Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Settle your life by the good you can do, the service you can render to the whole. Second comes the home, the family, the friends.

> To make a happy household clime
> For weans and wife,
> Is the true pathos and sublime
> Of human life.

Third comes the civic duty to the community, central to all the rest, for the connection with the whole body of humanity is determined by the relation with the particular group to which we belong.

Fourth in importance, though necessarily earlier in time, determined by the other considerations which are firmly established, comes the occupation by which the living is to be made, which must at all costs be serviceable to the whole, in obedience to the law of Christ, and harmonious with the good of the civic community.

And last comes the amusement ; which, being last, and regulated by the need of efficiency in all the rest, cannot claim an undue proportion of time and energy, but for

that reason remains a real amusement and affords a regular recreation.

This rearrangement of the interests of life is what is needed for the reform of the world. Such a rearrangement it should be the object of education to produce. Slow as the world's progress is, and sorrowful as the setbacks appear, it is the work of Christianity to have produced to a certain extent this rearrangement. To be Christlike has been a motive sufficiently strong to induce a large number of people to order their lives on the principle just suggested. The principle has not to be presented as a novelty; it is not a paradox to be explained. So far Christ has triumphed, that a standard is now admitted. Weak as men are, and prone to follow their passions and appetites as they are, throughout Christendom it would be admitted at least in theory—what Aristotle and even Plato and Socrates did not see, and what no other religion has realised or inculcated—that we are bound, all of us, as members of human society, to subordinate our interests to the common good, and to develop and exert all our faculties in order to make the best contribution that is possible for us to the welfare of all mankind. Christ did it, and as He was in the world, so should we be.

CHAPTER V

THE CHOICE OF A CALLING

> Belief or unbelief
> Bears upon life, determines its whole course,
> Begins at its beginning. BROWNING.

IN the choice of a profession, take Christ into counsel. And follow His example. In the first place, that single utterance of His boyhood is determinative. "Wist ye not," He said to His anxious parents, "that I must be about my Father's business?" The alternative translation of the ambiguous Greek phrase is "that I must be in my Father's house?" But the broader expression is the more serviceable: business we must have in this world. Every boy, and now every girl, must choose what business it is to be. And the first, the preliminary, the decisive choice, should be, "It shall be my Father's business." As Carlyle grew older, his mind fell back on the question and answer of the Shorter Catechism which his mother had taught him: "What is the chief end of man?" "To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." The world can never be right until that is understood and accepted, not only by the teachers but by the taught; not only by children but by their parents. The Shorter Catechism is perhaps no longer possible for the modern mind; but this statement of the end of life, the meaning and purpose of it all, is not only possible, but necessary. Here we have got wrong, and must recover. Children are not taught as emphatically and clearly as is needful what they are here for, and when the question comes up, What are you going to be? What is your occupation in the world? they have nothing to guide them except their taste, and if they have no taste, they are all at sea.

Let this be written in every nursery, in every school—let it be dropped into the child's mind as the first and the most vital suggestion: "To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever," that is the object of life. And therefore every child must learn and know and believe: "I must be about my Father's business"; must be able to ask parents, with astonishment, when they are recommending this or that path of riches, honour, advancement: "Do you not know that I must be about my Father's business?"

Our age is in a most unhappy condition. It has forgotten what the Father's business is. If it has any conception of God at all, the ideas are so vague, so sloppy, so shoddy, that the very reverse of the right principle is suggested to children. The question of the Shorter Catechism (shorter now than ever) runs: "What is the chief end of man?" "To glorify himself and to enjoy himself for ever." And, if theology obtrudes at all, the question becomes: "What is the chief end of God?" "To glorify me and to give me enjoyment for ever."

But it is the Father's business which alone matters; and to be about that business is for every man or child among us the sole condition of happiness or success.

But, in the second place, here is a fact, the meaning of which is sometimes overlooked; when the decision was taken to be about His Father's business, Jesus returned to His home in Galilee, was subject to His parents, grew up in the common, uneventful life of the little town, and, it would seem, earned his living as a carpenter until He was thirty years of age. There is nothing told about that obscure life, because there is nothing to tell. The apocryphal Gospels invented things, and unutterable rubbish those inventions are. In nothing does the inspiration of the true Gospels appear more striking than in their silences. Nothing to tell, except that He grew in favour with God and man. He went to the synagogue: it was His custom from boyhood; He studied the Scriptures and obtained a remarkable knowledge of them, which astonished the scribes. He was a good son, a good brother, to all appearance quite like others. He was a good workman, otherwise He would not have grown in favour with the men who were His customers.

He made the household furniture for the townsmen or the yokes and goads for the countrymen. It was in putting a yoke He had made on the oxen that He realised His own inner purpose and His ultimate relation to men: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad"—His word to Paul—was a reminiscence of early experience, when He made goads.

The uneventful years passed; no one, it appears, suspected what was going to happen when the voice of one crying in the wilderness should call the carpenter to His true task. Possibly the best preparation for the highest service in the world is the faithful and efficient discharge of the humblest necessary duties of life. Burns was driving his plough when song broke in upon him as from heaven. Stewart of Lovedale was engaged in the same task when the call came to drive a plough in the spiritual field and to break the fallows of Central Africa.

> Through silence and the trembling stars,
> Comes faith from tracts no feet have trod.[1]

Spinoza ground his lenses, and continued to grind them throughout, while his mind was working out the most complete system of thought and the most original that has come to any modern thinker. The "God-intoxicated man" was a diligent artisan, earning his bread by daily toil.

Epictetus was not so much as an artisan; he was a slave, the property of a master; but his thought was a gift to all ages.

Bishop Tucker was an artist, painting pictures, when the thought struck him that to go into Africa and save the souls of negroes was a more God-like task. Raymond Lull was a courtier, strumming a guitar and singing a ballad to his mistress's eyebrow, when he suddenly saw Christ Crucified before him, and arose to be the thinker, the missionary, the martyr, for his Lord.

And much of the world's best thought and many of the most precious books have come from men who were actively engaged all their lives in ordinary, useful, but uninspiring work. Grote wrote his *History of Greece* while he was a

[1] Tennyson.

banker. Mill was chained to his desk in the India Office, as Charles Lamb had been. The one wrote a *System of Logic* and a treatise on *Political Economy* which became text-books for Universities; the other wrote essays which will delight and charm successive generations as long as the English language lasts.

Those years, therefore, in the carpenter's shop are instructive. They remind the boy or girl starting out in life that to be about the Father's business may in the first instance be to undertake a quite common, but useful, task, and to do it well. By faithful discharge of that primary duty the mind becomes, or may become, receptive to the higher possibilities. While Paul is making tents he is carrying the gospel to the nations: while Carey is mending shoes his eye is on the map, and he is stirred to become the apostle of India and the greatest scholar in the languages of the East that his own, or perhaps any other, age produced. "Do some serviceable work in the world," therefore, is the immediate call, when the general position: I must be about my Father's business, is accepted.

In selecting an occupation, the natural bent and special faculties must be taken into account, but the primary question is, How can I best serve the rest? The answer comes very soon: My best service to my age will be by doing as well as I can what I am best qualified to do. But a second answer soon follows: If I cannot at once be what I feel that I am best able to be, let me learn to do effectively some common work by which my bread may be earned, and give my leisure to the things which might serve men better.

One of the first and best results of continuation schools, especially in factories and works, was that boys and girls with special aptitudes were discovered. Here was a boy, destined to the workshop, who had a remarkable gift of figures, and was therefore sent to the counting-house. Here was a girl, intending to do ordinary shop work, but she had a genius for designing beautiful dresses; and to that higher work she was sent. From the national point of view, it is of great importance by all means to find out the gifted brains and fingers, and to use them to the best advantage. But from the personal point of view, no one need hesitate

to take up the simplest work, preferably handicraft, by which to earn his bread, if he keeps his mind open and active for the higher work of which he finds himself capable. The fitness grows by fidelity in the common calling; the opportunity comes to the faithful by order of the Great Taskmaster.

I have known a man with physical difficulties enter the Civil Service and work honourably and effectively in a Government office, and yet by the diligent employment of his leisure hours become the friend, the teacher, the leader of boys, until he has turned out scores of equipped men for service in Church and State. An outsider might say: Why was not this man made a head master, a professor, a preacher? Why should he spend so much of his life in office work which others far less gifted could do? Perhaps the sufficient answer is: Jesus returned to Nazareth and was subject unto His parents, and until He was thirty years old, worked as a carpenter.

I have also seen a boy, conscious of a call to the ministry, and possessing voice and power of speech and personal qualities which would ensure success in the work; and yet he surrendered the idea, in order to serve and help his father, and throwing his powers into his profession, he at once discovered unexpected qualities which made him of great use; and at the same time he gave himself to work in the Church which was all, or almost all, that he could as a minister have done. And again the example of Christ shines out; for He was not a minister or a prophet or a student by profession. He was a country carpenter, who was about His Father's business, and became in lowly paths of service the teacher of all men and the Saviour of the world.

There are, then, two lines of service which open up before everyone—sometimes it is a choice between them, sometimes they run together in close conjunction. There is the service to others, to the world, in the calling itself, and there is the service that can be rendered outside the calling. The first may be more desirable, but is not for everyone possible. But as it is more desirable it should receive the first consideration, and it should be put before the mind of youth as the great possibility. The other is in a way the more

admirable, and possibly in God's eyes the more deserving Which it should be for each of us, we should get Him to decide. His vocation should be our calling: His will for us is alone unerring. Bushnell's beautiful thought, "Every man's life a plan of God," must be true. What is His plan for me? Where would He have me? What is my assigned task? If that question is seriously and constantly put, God has His own (often quite unexpected) ways of sending the answer. Let us examine the two lines.

Certainly it seems at first a great attraction to be able to unify life, to adopt a calling and engage in a work which, while it might secure the means of living, would be all along, continuously, whole-heartedly, the service of others. If you could give yourself to medicine, use all your faculties to master the art, and then devote all your life to practising it, you might, with undivided effort and pure intention, be serving your fellow-creatures in a certain specific and wholly desirable way, viz., in preserving them from disease and death, from the beginning to the end. Or again, if some artistic faculty is in you, some impulse of creation, some passion to observe and reproduce the beauty of things, you might find a fullness of life in the concentrated and divine toil of writing, or painting, or carving, or building. Those exquisite letters of James Smetham reveal a richness and completeness of the artist's life in a way that makes it very desirable for all who have the faculty for it; though the comparative failure to please the public, and the dark years of melancholy in which the life ended, suggest that there is a certain agony in the artist's dread vocation which might well make any aspiring poet, or painter, or sculptor consider whether he should not seek to establish his place in the world by some more mundane toil, and follow his art in *horæ subsecivæ*. Only the supreme artists seem completely justified in giving their whole time and strength to it, and their path is no path of flowers. The life of Michael Angelo in one way, and the life of William Blake in another, shows the toils and sorrows, the disappointments and humiliations, through which even the greatest artists must "follow the gleam."

But from the point of view which for the moment we

occupy, there is no calling more to be desired than that of the minister, at home or abroad. In this work alone, as things are now, a man (or now even a woman) is at once discharged from the anxiety about earning a living. The bread and water are assured by the institutions of the gospel itself. The ox is not muzzled when he treads out the corn. If this man will minister the spiritual things, the grateful Church will attend to his material wants. Here, then, is an ideal life presented to men (and now women), if only there is a true vocation, that is, if God has really summoned the man to this task and endowed him with the necessary gifts. He may give himself wholly to his "cure of souls"; he may be the shepherd of the sheep and of the lambs; he may study, think and pray; he may visit, watch and keep, and help; he may teach, and speak as God gives him utterance. This pastoral office, well discharged, is, notwithstanding its small material rewards and the possibility of missing human recognition, in all probability the most blessed occupation which falls to the lot of men. It is well that the small salary and the exiguous circumstances should ward off the unworthy. Even as it is, many creep into the priest's office for its emoluments, and lower it and degrade themselves. But if the man is really called, if he is sincere and diligent in his calling, his reward is incalculable. Philip Doddridge has a charming passage in which he describes the delight of the pastor's life:—

"When I awake in the morning, which is always before it is light, I address myself to God and converse with Him; speak to Him when I am lighting my candle and putting on my clothes; and have often more delight in coming out of my chamber, though it be hardly a quarter of an hour after my awakening, than I have enjoyed for whole days, or perhaps weeks, of my life. He meets me in my study, in secret, in family devotions. It is pleasant to read, pleasant to compose, pleasant to converse with my friends at home, pleasant to visit those abroad—the poor, the sick; pleasant to write letters of necessary business, by which any good can be done; pleasant to go out and preach the gospel to poor souls who are thirsting for it, and others dying without it; pleasant in the weekday to think how near

Sabbath is;—but oh! much, much more pleasant to think how near eternity is, and how short the journey through this wilderness, and that it is but a step from earth to heaven." [1]

Ordered to Lisbon for his health, he was sorrowful, but said to Lady Huntingdon: "I can as well go to heaven from Lisbon as from my own study at Northampton." It was a visible going to heaven. He wrote from the ship's deck in those early October days: "Such transporting views of the heavenly world is my Father now indulging me with, no words can express." Gliding into the Tagus, he had a rush of joy. But before the month was out, he had gone. He was not yet fifty. But what would you more—a life which blessed others from beginning to end, a life which did not end, gliding with great joy into eternity?

This pastoral office, this *Imitatio Christi*, this following Christ in the attempt to seek, to save, to teach, to comfort, to bless human beings, is the most to be desired of all human functions. It has its sufferings and disappointments. It is subjected to its own peculiar temptations. As Dr. Alexander Whyte said, when preaching about the wicked who stand in slippery places: "My slippery place is my pulpit." The man enamoured of the world, and eager to taste the world's life, will never choose it. But happy are they whom God calls to this task; they can, if they will, live whole-heartedly, not working for daily bread and giving the leisure moments to God's service, but giving all they have and are to His service, and receiving from His hands their daily bread, unsought and undeserved.

But, just because this rare sweetness and completeness of the ministry cannot be theirs, they are to be the more admired who follow a secular calling, and then devote the leisure they can secure, the talents they have acquired, and the wealth they have earned, to the service of their fellow-men. Yes, the more to be admired, if they come off triumphantly. But the snares are many and the victors are few. Too easily that secular calling engrosses time and thought. The aim at making a living excites the delight of making money. The intention of doing good to others in the

[1] *Philip Doddridge*, by Charles Stanford, p. 64. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

trade, the manufacturing, the commercial transactions, is lost sight of. Nay, a more serious danger still arises. The service of religion, which engages the leisure, may by a subtle self-delusion take the place of the service to God and man in the business. And that saddest and most appalling phenomenon may present itself, of a man active in the religious world conducting his business without charity and even without honesty. Dr. John Hunter, we are told in the Life written by his son, withdrew from a great evangelistic mission which had been planned and prepared for at great cost. The reason was that Keir Hardie brought to light that the man who was the leading spirit in these pious preparations was treating his own workpeople with a rigour and injustice which made them practically slaves.

But in the cases of success there is something which appears sometimes more Christlike than the ministry. When Frank Crossley went down to Ancoats to live among his workmen, and to pour out wealth and love and spiritual zeal for their good, this Saint Francis of Ancoats, as his biographer, Dr. Rendel Harris, called him, seemed to be reproducing in the nineteenth the very spirit and power of the " little, poor man " of Assisi in the thirteenth century. And there is a vast Order of Franciscans in this sense, a multitude, perhaps not so large relatively as it was a generation ago, but yet innumerable, of those who do their business all day, and give their evenings and Sundays to the service of Christ's Church. The teachers in Sunday Schools, the workers in clubs, the visitors, the organisers, the deacons, elders, stewards, churchwardens, scoutmasters, leaders of girl guides, boys' brigade captains, what a vast army they are in this country; they get slight recognition on earth. The preacher is talked about, but these are taken for granted. Their voluntary service seems less esteemed than the paid work of Church leaders. But for pure Christlikeness it is among these that we might find the brightest examples. If you see an unmarried woman who earns her own living by day, and in the evening is regularly in her girls' club, making herself the elder sister and friend, not so much teaching the neglected and untrained girls of the great city as drawing them by the compulsion of a

bright example to higher things and to God ; if you note how a lovely purity pervades lives, the outward surroundings of which were as unfavourable as they could be, how the spirit of saving others takes possession of those who themselves have just been saved ; if you realise that this woman, without thought of recognition or reward, is literally giving herself not only for, but to, these others who are less fortunate than she is, you may recognise Christ here living and working among us still. There are conspicuous examples of Christ in great ministers, great leaders ; but His likeness shines brighter still in those who give all, and get nothing, who find their great reward in helping and blessing in lowly personal ways, and who ask for nothing but to hear Christ say : " She hath done what she could."

Very astonishing is it to see the multitude of young men and women who thus freely and constantly give themselves, for the love of God, to the service of others. They emerge on all hands, when the need becomes apparent, followers of Christ, soldiers of the Cross. But, on the whole, still more astonishing is it that so many refuse this opportunity, and miss the rich rewards which come unsought in the lasting love and gratitude of those who have been taught and helped. It is very strange, and a proof of almost incredible blindness, that men and women prefer to live for themselves alone, with the inevitable result of weariness, disgust and self-loathing ; that they would rather have the fleeting enjoyment of the dance, the pictures, the theatre, than the eternal blessedness of human hearts turning to them with unspeakable devotion, and of Christ saying to them, " Well done, good and faithful servant."

For, after all, this Christlikeness expressed in the motto " For others " is a good which experience has put beyond all possibility of question. The truth of Christ is a truism. It can hardly be missed except wilfully. Give yourself royally, forget yourself altogether, live your life wholly and absolutely for the good you can do and the help you can render. Do this by choice, quite deliberately ; return to it again, if for a moment you forget. If you think of self at all, do so only in order that you may train and equip and discipline that self for the service of others. And there

opens before you the way of life, joy in your days despite the toils, the sacrifices and sorrows: an end of life which is an opening Gate.

But quite obviously that broad and easy way of self-seeking and self-pleasing, that choice of passing pleasures and fading crowns, that wish to stand well with men as if there were no higher authority that you had to obey, no nobler will that you had to execute, this way so apparently easy, so broad, so thronged, leads only to death.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORLD OF BUSINESS

THERE is an extraordinary difficulty in bringing the example of Christ to bear on the vast commercial nexus of the modern world. Very slowly indeed does the light penetrate this obscure region. And political economy, which is the specialised science of the production and distribution of wealth, seems to claim the whole domain of commerce as its own, with warnings erected on all hands that such trespassers as morality or religion will be prosecuted. The new political economy, which sprang out of Ruskin's fertile brain and has begun to find its exponents in such well-known economists as Professor Marshall, when it has had time to win its way to general acceptance, will make it far easier to accept the precepts and example of Christ as a guide in economic matters. For the essential change in the new political economy is that it declines to treat the making of material wealth in the abstract apart from the human beings that make and use it, and the human lives affected by its use. Wealth has a new meaning, which incidentally includes, but cannot possibly be expressed by, the material commodities to which the term was once confined. Wealth is now recognised as the well-being of human beings; and the wealth of a nation is to be measured only by the number of healthy and happy lives that compose it. In this much larger and truer conception of wealth, the application of Christ's standard becomes possible, desirable, nay inevitable. He might well decline to be a judge between two brothers quarrelling about an inheritance, because the acquisitive temper, the longing to get as much as possible for one's self, was to Him quite beside the mark. It did not matter in His eyes how

much wealth in that material sense a man had, for a man's life consists not in the abundance of his possessions. If the man seeking his share of the inheritance surrendered it without a murmur to his brother, there at once Christ would see *wealth* in the generous self-sacrifice, that would, in all probability, be the way by which the brother would be induced voluntarily to share the property. Christ was poor, and remained poor. He never had money in His hands, except a coin that was lent to be the text of a discourse. We can see and acknowledge that He was rich beyond the dreams of avarice in His self-less love and service, in His relation with the Father, in His memories of the glory from which He came, and in His expectation of the glory to which He would return. He is the impressive illustration, therefore, of what the new political economy would regard as wealth. He has taught us to recognise a wealth totally dissociated from money. His example shines now on the world with a new meaning and power since Ruskin and Marshall have thrown a new atmosphere about the economics of Adam Smith or Bastiat.

But it is very difficult for this Divine ray to penetrate the seething and tossing ocean of commerce and industry. All we can say is that the light does penetrate a little way, and ever plays on the surface with a kind of " unnumbered smile " of promise. We can no longer acquiesce in the cynical description of trade quoted from Jesus the Son of Sirach, for Jesus of Nazareth has redeemed, potentially, all commerce. Once let education proceed on the application of His principles to all buying and selling, and to all production and distribution of material wealth ; once let His phrase " rich towards God " be taken strictly as the description of true riches and the guide for seeking and possessing and using money, and all those corrupted currents of the world which flow through the markets and exchanges, and demoralise mankind with the extremes of wealth and poverty, will be cleansed.

Suppose we try for a moment to think out what would be the effect on business of accepting frankly the standard of Christlikeness ; we might then try to estimate how far that standard has appealed, and is now appealing, to the world ;

perhaps such a study may encourage the faith that even the Malebolge of our modern trade and finance *can* be cleansed, and that a day will come when the love of money, which is the primary curse of humanity, will give place to the love of man and of God.

Grasping the fact that the Master from the first felt that He must be about His Father's business, and yet He spent the first thirty years of His life in the carpenter's home, engaged Himself in the carpenter's work ; and noting how the greatest mission ever undertaken to man emerged out of those uneventful years like the bright blossom of a slowly flowering plant, we may, without much hesitation, trace out the effects of this standard applied to the life of handicrafts, trade, business, finance. The master-thought in facing the business of life would be to serve the rest, to be sure that the occupation of the day should be, not hurtful, but beneficial to the community. This would concentrate attention on the work that had to be done, and would constantly raise the question of its serviceableness. Not : How much can I get ? but : How much can I serve ? would be the ruling consideration. This would introduce into every operation of hand or brain a moral element. Every labour of the day would look to the common good. The maker of a definite and obvious article would have a decided advantage, he would take a pride in turning it out as satisfactory as possible ; its usefulness and its beauty would be his aim in view, that his handiwork might help whoever should use it, and gladden whoever should see it. The spirit which we suppose wrought in mediæval craftsmanship, when men worked for the glory of God and were content to set their noblest work in some unseen place high up on the walls or in the tower of a church because God could see, was an illustration of Christlikeness. And that spirit brought into industry would at once give dignity to all work and introduce an artistic value into everything that is made. But the same spirit would produce great effects even in that monotonous and lifeless kind of toil which results from the extreme division of labour and the use of machines, which, more than anything else, has deadened and degraded the modern world. That perpetual repetition of the same movement throughout the day, which, in processes

of production by machinery on the large scale, must be the task of the majority of workers, would change its character under this inspiration. True, nothing could be more deadening in itself than the mechanical putting of the article in course of manufacture under a machine for a single process; the needle maker, for instance, never makes a needle—all he does is to put the wires in batches into the machine, which cuts off the right length, or the machine which flattens the end and pierces the eye, and so on, through many processes, until the needle at last emerges polished and fit for use. To be perpetually occupied with that one stage in the production, without seeing the beginning or the end, may result in reducing the human being to a machine, only a machine which will seek relief from the soulless monotony of the day in some exciting and demoralising amusement. But let the Christ-motive come in, and not only is the drudgery blessed, but it can be turned to a high use. The work is useful, not only because I earn my living by it, but because the ultimate product is needed in the world's life. Though my share in it is so fractional, so imperceptible, yet I take my part in the great order, as a planet does in the solar system. And there is this advantage, that, as the work demands only a small part of my thought and quickly becomes almost automatic, it leaves my mind free, singularly free; and I can think and plan, and praise and pray, and keep in a conscious communion with God through the day's work, so that when the toil ceases I find myself refreshed with that intercourse, and ready for the home or for innocent recreations which will be a continuation of that Divine Presence.

This transformation of common work by the introduction of a nobler thought is quite possible. The object of making money need never master men, and under Christ's influence never would. I remember in early visits to Norway, nearly forty years ago, as soon as we left Bergen and started out on the long carriole rides by fjord and fjeld, stopping at the stations for change of horse, for meals, and ultimately for the night, we found ourselves among peasants, dignified and self-respecting, whose aim seemed not to get money from us but only to render service to us. So that the horse and the carriole pleased us; so that the simple meal

was to our liking; so that the bedroom was not too primitive and unfurnished; so that they might get the smile of pleasure and the word of thanks, the simple people did not concern themselves about payment. They would charge very little, and forget to claim what they charged. They would leave items out of the modest note; they would make unsolicited reductions for unimaginable reasons. Travelling in Norway was a balm to the mind as well as a tonic to the nerves. There were, then, we felt, men and women in the world who were not thinking of gain, but found their reward in service.

Thus, all forms of work, even the most soulless drudgery, can be transformed. A transfiguration can take place like that of Jesus on the mount. The common raiment may be white and glistening and the face may shine.

But let us follow this out in the operations of buying and selling, whether retail trade or large commercial undertakings. Here the master-thought of the seller would be to get and to sell good stuff, to be sure that the purchaser got good value, to make the transaction a mutual benefit. The thought of the buyer, on the other hand, would be to give full payment for what he received. Instead of striving to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market, which is an altogether base, selfish, and, in the long run, demoralising rule of conduct, the motives of buyer and seller would be reversed; the seller would be anxious to do well by the customer, and the customer's chief anxiety would be that he should not take an unfair advantage of the seller. The same motive would govern the transactions of trade, even on the great scale. The manufacturer would find his reward in being able to supply the wants of men as completely and as economically as possible, the merchant would find his account in making the transfer of goods to the places where they are most needed as expeditious and effective as possible; his object would be world-service.

Cheating and dishonesty in trade are, in the long run, bad business. Honesty is the best policy; if everyone accepted its ruling, its superiority to the tricks and frauds and lies which corrupt trade would be recognised. If one man is honest among a crowd of rascals he may have to suffer,

But if all were honest, all would benefit, and only the rascal would suffer.

But carry this standard into the difficult arena of competition. Unrestrained competition has made the very idea of competition seem illegitimate. But suppose it is a question of competition in goodness, can the idea be condemned? Let competition be only a noble struggle to do the most service to the world, let the desire of personal gain be eliminated, and the word covers one of the most necessary elements of human progress. We are all running in a race to serve and help mankind; the winner is crowned, but the rest have served. All business might be brought under the same rule as art or invention or science. When an artist strives to produce the most beautiful picture he may far out-distance other artists, but that competition is wholly good. When Edison toils to discover the laws of electricity and to apply them to practical use, he may pass all competitors, but in the long run all benefit by his achievement. When Lister surpassed all others in his discovery of the antiseptic treatment of wounds, that successful competition was an unmixed gain to mankind; the honours showered upon him were only the sign of human gratitude unable adequately to express itself.

And in business, and all methods of production, it is admitted that only competition develops the full resources of the situation; only competition leads to new discoveries; only competition brings prices down, until commodities are within the reach of all. To eliminate competition, then, would, if it were possible, be disastrous. We should rapidly sink back into a stagnant and unprogressive state.

But the competition need not be for personal gain, or even for personal repute. It need not be injurious to unsuccessful competitors. And that is where the law of Christ-likeness would make the whole difference. Each one would do his best to find the most economical ways of production, to put the most serviceable articles on the market, to make improvements in machinery or method; but not to reap personal advantage to himself, only with the view of endowing the community with the results of his labours and of sharing with competitors the fruits of success. That is obviously

the right course, and therefore it is not impossible. For the good of the whole it is desirable that the best faculties of all should be fully developed; but it is not for the good of all, nor even of the successful, that the personal gain should be kept unshared. A man in business, therefore, might be as ready to communicate to all the advantages he has gained, just as the doctor communicates his discovery of a cure, or the successful methods of treatment, to the whole profession, just as the poet or the painter finds his reward in the widest appreciation of his poem or picture.

A man bent on Christlikeness could take no pleasure in defeating competitors, who are his brothers. He would desire not to drive them out but rather to drive them in, to put his own advantage, as it were, within their reach.

Under the influence of this truly social spirit, certain practices which have stolen into the modern world, unnoticed and unrebuked, would become too revolting for men to engage in. The idea of "cornering," of preying on the public by huge and selfish combines, for the purpose of checking production or running up prices, would be felt to be as repulsive as highway robbery or crimes of violence. It is only because exploitation of the public has not been set, or seen, in its true light that men thoughtlessly drift into it, and then are led to defend it from motives of self-interest. There are some men who would not steal from an individual, but have no hesitation in cheating the community; but the rule we are considering opens our eyes to the fact that the community is the larger individual; and to exploit the community, to evade taxation, to make illicit profits in Government service, to appropriate by skill or cunning money which should serve the whole, is all one with stealing from an individual. The commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," would have a wider application; it would prohibit much speculation, gambling and dubious financial operations. For it would become evident that it is always a form of stealing to get or to hold money for which no equivalent of service is rendered.

What is money? It is a conventional token for the measurement and transfer of human labour and skill. It commands so much toil or service of our fellow-men. We

hold it, therefore, justly only when we are rendering to our fellow-men its worth.

But let us follow up the inquiry in the matter of employment. If Christ's rule prevails, an employer never forgets that the employed are his brothers. If for a moment he puts his business first, he immediately remembers that his business can only prosper in the real sense if all who are employed benefit by it. Therefore, in the conduct of the business he does all in his power for the health and wealth and prosperity of those whom he regards as his helpers and partners in the enterprise. The employed, therefore, under the same rule, recognising that the business as such is seeking their welfare, and the manager of the business is as much concerned for them as for himself, begin to concern themselves for him. They recognise that their interests are not irreconcilable or even conflicting ; the good of all implies the good of each. Under this rule success in business becomes possible, and contentment prevails. Industrial life becomes interesting and pleasant. Its hardships, strain, and weariness are reduced to a minimum. The industrial revolution which was working itself out during the nineteenth century, the enormous advance in machinery and increase of the scale of production, with the consequent separation and consequent strained relations between employer and employed, passes into another phase. The industrial revolution develops into a Christian revolution. For under this rule it is recognised that no business can be stable and successful in the true sense unless all who are engaged in it are veritable partners, sharing according to scale in all profits and contributing according to capacity to effective production.

Under this rule the word " profit " acquires a new meaning. It no longer means the gain which an employer or capitalist can reap for himself, but the advantages which he is able to bestow on all who are engaged in the industry. Profit in the old sense loses its attraction. To pile up a fortune for oneself at the expense of the workers seems distasteful, selfish, immoral. Dives in his purple and fine linen is no longer an object of envy, any more than Dives lifting up his eyes in hell, being in torment.

Indeed, the rule of Christlikeness makes luxury un-

attractive. Extravagance and waste or personal indulgence become painful. The one luxury is that of doing good. The only extravagance is a prodigality of sharing all gains with those who have co-operated in production. John Ruskin inherited a large fortune from his father, and while he was teaching his generous new political economy, he incurred the charge of living on the usury which he denounced and enjoying the wealth that came to him at the expense of the dispossessed. But in the end it was found that he had freely and constantly been giving. He disbursed his whole fortune in service to his generation. He lived strictly on what he earned as teacher and writer. And this he did, not with any sense of merit, but as the inevitable outcome of his moral convictions. *Unto this Last*, was his reading of Christ's law, and " unto this last " was the practice of his own life.

Now, though this is only a bird's-eye view of the subject, it will be seen that the acceptance of Christlikeness as the standard in business would continually and completely transform our social system. And who can doubt that this was Christ's purpose—included in His conception of the Kingdom of Heaven ? Because this standard was forsaken in practice and neglected in religious teaching ; because, under a mistaken application of the theories of political economy, we in Christian countries gave ourselves over to making personal gain regardless of the community, and became what Mr. Tawney calls an Acquisitive Society ; and because in course of time personal greed and unscrupulous competition were accepted as the law of life—" everyone for himself, and the Devil take the hindmost " the motto which was unconsciously stamped on our brows—Socialism and then Communism was offered as the alternative.

I remember nearly fifty years ago hearing William Morris in the hall of University College, Oxford, with his burly figure and ardent countenance, indoctrinating the undergraduates of that day with the Socialism which was to do what Christianity had left undone. Surely and steadily the doctrine of Socialism won its way, at first trying to retain the epithet Christian, but more and more repudiating Christianity and coming to regard Christianity as its main enemy, and at last

establishing its schools to train up the children in the negation of God and in Collectivist doctrines as the religion of the future. At last, after the Russian Revolution, Socialism had its chance, and the teaching of Karl Marx was put into practice, with those concomitants of violence and bloodshed which Marx foretold and allowed.

But Bolshevism in Russia has brought home to mankind that mankind cannot be regenerated in that way. For that regeneration a change has to take place in the thought and the heart of men. Christlikeness has acquired a new significance, a new mandate. The revolution wanted is, men begin to perceive, the change from self-love into love of others. Force cannot effect this; to release the fiendish passions of our lower nature, to butcher those who possess or those who will not accept the formula, and to wade through blood to a new era and a regenerate society, is found now to be an impossible way. It is like Ajax slaughtering the sheep, mistaking them for his enemies. When he recovered from his madness, he killed himself in shame and disgust.

What is needed for the better Age, the reconstituted society, is the spirit which was in Christ; the spirit which sets the good of the whole first, and personal advantage second, and only so far as it is involved in the first.

How this master-motive can be substituted for the motives which still predominate, and whether we can ever hope to see men accepting Christlikeness unquestioningly as their standard, we must afterwards inquire. But it is something to realise that this, if it could be accepted, would be that transformation of the world's life which we are all yearning for, which many would lay down their lives to achieve.

Now let us recognise that this standard is accepted by many, and that resolute efforts are being made to go by it, not without very encouraging results.

I will close this chapter with an example which happens to be known to me personally. It is one of many in our country to-day. But this is singular in being an experiment carried through successfully for thirty years. When Mr. Theodore Taylor, M.P., became sole proprietor of the business known as J. T. and J. Taylor, Ltd., woollen manufacturers, of Batley and Bramley, he determined at once, in

obedience to his Master Christ, to put into operation the system of profit-sharing. Proceeding cautiously, and keeping in close touch with his workers, he began on a fixed principle to give them all bonuses out of the annual profits. In four years' time he turned the business into a limited liability company, in order that the workers might be shareholders. In the annual report of 1922 the profit-sharing scheme is illustrated by some actual cases which are worth quoting :—

" A certain employee who has been with the Company twenty years and has been paid £2,547 in wages, or an average of £2 9s. a week, has received in dividend and bonus an average addition to his wages of 19s. 4d. per week, or 39·45 per cent.—for the last year it has been £2 2s. 6½d. in addition to the weekly wage. Altogether he has received extra to his wages over £1,000. Another man has received in the same time £986 in addition to wages. Another £935."

In the thirty years there has been distributed as the fruit of the profit-sharing, in shares, in cash, in Government securities and allocation to the workers' benefit fund, well over £550,000.

There are 1,800 employees in the firm, and they own now much above half the capital and receive over three-fourths of the profits.

Thus this one employer has made his workers the partakers of his profits, and they in return have made the business a success. In the last and worst year the business has experienced, this announcement could be made to the assembled workers :—

" We have decided to declare, in addition to the 5 per cent. interest on capital, a further dividend of 10 per cent., and on labour of 10 per cent., together with a double bonus of 20 per cent. to those qualified for it. Shareholders will therefore receive a cash dividend of 15 per cent. Later on, single bonus receivers will get 10 per cent. and double bonus receivers 20 per cent. on their salaries or wages for the past year."

On the face of it this employer seems to have given to his workers over half a million which he might have kept

to enrich himself and to spend in luxury. But he regards himself as a gainer by this generous giving.

"The plan which we have adopted, by which every worker the whole year with us shares in the profits, is after all but the practice of Christian brotherhood. It is based on good will towards men, and it promotes good will among men. If universally adopted wherever possible, it would, I am convinced, banish class hatred." Evidently it would. "The only ground on which class hatred can be whipped up in this country is the conflict or supposed conflict between the interests of employer and employed. If all employers took the step that we have taken of unifying those two interests, class hatred could not survive, and the first and most important step would have been taken toward world peace." *O si sic omnes!*

It is evident, therefore, not only that the standard of Christlikeness would transform business and end our industrial unrest, but also that there are brave and good men resolutely applying that standard. And efforts are being made in all directions to get it acknowledged, as "The National Movement Towards a Christian Order of Commerce and Industry"[1] shows.

[1] The office of the Movement is 24, Great Russell Street.

CHAPTER VII

PROFESSIONS

PROFESSIONS are esteemed higher than business, simply because, in theory at least, while business is conducted avowedly for gain, the profession aims directly at service. We have to admit that the theory often breaks down, and professional men are as covetous and self-regarding as others, and seem worse, because they falsify the conception that is formed of them. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* Indeed, by a sad irony, some of the professions become proverbial for their dishonesty, unfairly no doubt, but yet with such persistency that it is hard to maintain the distinction which has just been drawn between professions and business. "I don't want," said Dr. Johnson, "to say anything disrespectful of the gentleman who has just left the room, but I believe he is an attorney!" When the doctor was buried in the parish churchyard among his former patients, it was proposed to put upon his tombstone: *Si monumentum quæris circumspice.* When a clergyman asked Garrick why he drew the people in crowds, while the church was half empty, the great actor said: "I present fiction as if it were truth, and you present truth as if it were fiction." And so on with other professions; they quickly, owing to the faults of professional men, become stigmatised as even worse than business, because, while in business people are avowedly serving their own interests and seeking gain, in the professions people are seeking gain just as much under the pretence of disinterested service.

But the professions retain their eminence in the public estimate because there are vast numbers of professional people who justify that estimate. And yet there is obvious need of bringing to bear the great motive of Christlikeness

to correct the defaulters and to confirm the faithful. To professional people the Christian rule comes as a call to act according to their profession. "You are dedicated to the cause of Justice; you defend and administer, you modify and even make, the laws which secure the well-being, the very existence of society. Keep the purpose pure. Let no love of gain blind your eyes or bribe you to commit or to palliate injustice." Or: "You have undertaken the task of healing disease, and of preserving individuals and the public from its inroads. To save and to prolong life is the purpose of your own life. See to it that you do not let the money element dry up your compassion or deflect your motive; beware lest professional conventions establish a tyranny over you, which may prevent you from recognising truth, or from using your healing art with the greatest effect." Or: "You, at the call of God, have given your life to teach, to exercise a pastoral charge over your fellow-men, to bring back the wanderers, to preach repentance and remission of sins. Watch with peculiar care lest another motive should intervene and your sacred task should come to be merely a means of living to you, lest cowardice should prevent you from declaring the whole truth, lest indolence and carelessness should make you indifferent to the souls of men."

That Christlikeness has entered largely into the professions we all know; that it should enter in more generally and completely must be our aim. It will make justice, mercy and truth prevail among men; it will redeem the professions from a certain sterility and staleness which is their chief danger. A great professional success may arouse our admiration and even our jealousy, but it does not often attract our love. Unless we are wrongly informed, these successful lives too often wither in the sunshine of the prosperous years.

But Christ often enters very fully into professional lives. Lord Cairns, when he was Lord Chancellor, often impressed people with his unruffled calm and cheerfulness. The vexations and toils of his professional work never seemed to make any impression upon him. The reason was, as he once explained it, that he began each day with prolonged prayer, and rolled upon God the cares of every kind which the day

would bring. Christ was constantly in prayer; He spent long nights in such communion with His Father. He was explicit in telling all of us to pray always and not to faint. Lord Cairns followed his Master with that result, which was manifest to all. No doubt a lawyer's life exposes him to peculiar and acute temptations. Much is entrusted to him, much is left to his honour. He can extend the scope of litigation, prolong the suit, run up heavy charges which, though legal, are oppressive to clients. When he is an advocate, he may be tempted to defend a cause which he knows is wrong; he may by his ability justify the guilty and condemn the innocent; he may even, by using his superior knowledge of law and precedents, be able to trick an adversary and violate that higher law of equity. *Summum jus, summa injuria.* And the most learned and exact advocate may be most effective in perverting justice.

But as the temptations are many and subtle, so the victory over them is a great spiritual gain. A lawyer may not be very successful; he may not make a great income; he may lose his prestige; he may fail at the Bar to get briefs, and never come within sight of the Bench. In this lottery the prizes are few. But let a man act on the principle of Christ-likeness, and use all his knowledge and ability strictly for the good of his clients, anxious only that justice may be done; let him forgo all opportunity of dubious gain, and be content with a reward which falls well within the margin of the possible; and he may with diligence and fidelity live a life which he can review at the end with a consciousness that he has served his fellowmen and benefited society, and Christ may acknowledge him as one of His most useful servants.

The medical profession is in itself an Imitation of Christ. The doctor may be himself an Agnostic, a Materialist, a scorner of things spiritual, but there he is, by virtue of his calling, ever bent on saving life and relieving pain; his work is good if he is not, and for the most part his work makes him good; he is, even though he knows it not, walking in the footsteps of the Son of Man.

> The world's a room of sickness where each heart
> Knows its own trouble and unrest;
> The truest wisdom there and noblest art
> Is his, who skills of comfort best.

In these latter days the nurse has come to share the honours of the doctor. Her patience, her assiduity, her womanly tenderness, often does as much as the doctor himself to make illness bearable or to restore health.

Ian Maclaren drew the picture of a Country Practitioner in the *Bonnie Briar Bush*. That self-forgetting, toiling, unrewarded doctor of the Glen, the servant of all, the friend of all, the beloved of all, seemed to the reader, when that wonderful book first broke upon the world, like the shadow of Jesus. Was it idealised, or was it the medical profession generalised? In our petulance, when a doctor has failed us, or in our indignation when we are staggered by an exorbitant fee, we take up the cynical judgment so lightly passed upon the whole profession. But when we are fair; when we observe at close quarters the doctor and the nurse at their work; when we experience their care and devotion, we own that the Country Practitioner is typical. Doctors and nurses as a body are such as he; in varying degrees, and often in a super-eminent degree, these servants of humanity are always using all their powers, with very scanty rewards, to heal the sick and comfort the miserable. And, despite the disparaging words on the lip, the public knows it well and in its heart acknowledges the truth. Luke Fildes's "Doctor" was not a favourite with artists, who scorn to make an appeal, moral or spiritual, to the human heart through their painting. But that picture went right home, and may probably live longer than any of the great productions of futurists and cubists. Yes, that is the doctor we know. That is the doctor as such. He has sat all night by the little suffering child in the cottage. The cold dawn is breaking, and the anxious parents watch too. The candle flickers in the socket. But the doctor is waiting and watching, if possibly, by his skill and help, he may bring that little fluttering spirit back and open up for the unconscious child a new day. The heart of man blesses the doctor and the nurse.

In the work of Emile Coué at Nancy we have been permitted to see the healing profession rising to an extraordinary elevation, ready to imperil all its methods and traditions and emoluments, if only it can heal and save.

M. Coué has made, experimentally, a remarkable discovery. He has demonstrated that the body is dominated by the mind; and that in the unconscious part of the mind reside powers which can be set in motion by suggestion, and even by autosuggestion. He has studied how these unconscious powers can be directed to the healing of disease. And using his discovery ungrudgingly and unsparingly, without fee or reward, he has encouraged vast multitudes of people to heal themselves by suggesting to their own minds ideas of health and well-being. The most obstinate diseases yield to the powerful working of those forces, set in motion by the mind's persistent imagination of good, forces which act with an intelligence and skill which excel the conscious faculties. This is a discovery indeed; it may revolutionise human life; especially as the same method which overcomes disease can be applied to moral progress and to spiritual life. M. Coué has taught us, whether intentionally or not, how prayer works, and how the realities of religion produce the exalted, the serviceable, the noble life.

For suppose in those moments of the upwelling of the unconscious and the subsidence of the conscious, just on falling asleep and on waking, we make some spiritual suggestion to our minds, the effect is just as evident as when we make the curative suggestion. M. Coué bids us repeat twenty times, in the morning and the evening and at midday, the formula which is translated into English: "Day by by day, in every way, I am getting better and better."

But the formula may be improved into: "Day by day, in every way, Christ takes more complete possession of me." That is essentially the way by which Christ has always worked. Prayers in the morning, and at noon and in the evening, have always aimed at bringing the powers of Christ to work on mind and will and body. St. Francis by such autosuggestion produced the stigmata in his body; or by the steady repetition of the one word, God, God, God, brought all the powers of God into operation in his life. In some such way all the saints in all ages have worked. And desirable as health is, holiness in more desirable still.

M. Coué has thus made a contribution to theology and

to the religious life; by explaining, unconsciously, how Christianity works, he has encouraged us to practise it. But this vivacious Frenchman, with his kindly face and bright humour, maintained in full vigour at seventy by the method which he is recommending to us all, is a beautiful manifestation of Christlikeness at a time when a practical demonstration of what it is seemed specially needed.

It is this intrinsic Christlikeness of the healing art which gives to the modern medical missionary his peculiar place in the hierarchy of service. If there is nothing nobler than the work of doctor and nurse, the noblest exercise of their noble art is in the Mission Field. The doctor there goes out to those whose sufferings are greater than those of people at home, because of the total ignorance of the art and methods of healing. He enters into the darkest house of pain to bring help which comes intrinsically as a message from Heaven. He consciously and deliberately follows Christ and heals the body in order to bring the soul to Him. Read the life of Dr. Pennel on that north-west frontier of India among the fierce and untameable Afridis, and consider how any man could anyhow or anywhere express more completely in the modern world the life of the Master.

Or that young doctor, Arthur Jackson, who in the fullness of joy and strength went out to China, and in his effort to save the plague-stricken fugitives at Mukden, himself fell a victim to the scourge; recognised at once by the Chinese as a messenger of God; preaching Christ to the people by laying down his life for them, as Christ laid down His, does he not, apart from all his service to the Chinese, render the highest service to us all by showing what a Christian life ideally is, and how Christ lives and works in a young man to-day?

And who has not read *The Beloved Physician of Tsang Chou*,[1] the life traced by a father's loving hand of his boy who ended his brief career at the age of thirty-two, but had already won the admiration, the love, the trust, of the Chinese? The closing pages of that book sound in one's heart, not as a threnody, but as a pæan. "I feel that I cannot close this service to-night," said the Rev. Miller

[1] Published by Headley Brothers, Bishopsgate Street Without, in 1907.

Graham at the Union Church, Tientsin, "without giving some expression to the keen sense of loss which the Kingdom of God has suffered through the sudden and lamented death of Dr. Arthur Peill. A true son of the Kingdom has passed from us. To know him even a little was to love him. He was so entirely unconventional, so thoroughly human, so genuinely sympathetic, that he made friends easily, and I should think was without enemies. To come into touch with him was, for some, to have for ever afterwards an entirely new conception of the Christian missionary. His apostolic devotion to his work, his whole-hearted consecration to the service of his Master, his amazing vitality and almost boyish enthusiasm, his deep disparagement of himself and his keen appreciation of the worth of others, endeared him to all who knew him, and made some of us not a little ashamed in his presence, while we could not but feel stimulated by his noble example. He was a man all heart, and it was inevitable that a nature like his should be profoundly affected by the widespread religious movement which visited his station last year (1905). He put his whole strength into that work and could not fail to suffer in consequence. . . . I have never known a missionary who seemed to forget himself so completely in his work. He lived in the very heart of his Chinese people, and took infinite pains to interest outsiders in the people he loved and for whom he laboured. That so promising a career has been so early closed is an irreparable loss to China, and adds another illustrious name to those of Roberts and Mackenzie, gladly given for her redemption.

"All such separations from us are ascensions to God. Parted from us, they pass into the presence of the King, there to continue their work as we do, till the day break and the shadows flee away."

The Committee of brother missionaries said: "This Committee puts on record its sense of the great loss sustained by the whole North China Field in the death of our beloved colleague, Dr. Arthur Peill. His genial and brotherly disposition, his manliness combined with humility, won for him the respect, admiration and love of everyone, Chinese and foreigner, Christian and non-Christian, alike. His

skill and devotion to his profession made his name known and honoured throughout a wide region of country, while his ardent zeal as an evangelist, his abounding labours and believing prayers were manifestly used of God in the gracious revival among his students and patients, and in the Tsang Chou churches during the winter of 1905–6. His name will always be associated with those of Mackenzie and Roberts, two of the most spiritually minded and most successful missionaries ever sent out by the London Missionary Society."

Then the father adds: "Writing this, here in Arthur's study, I almost feel as if he were looking over my shoulder now, and I ask myself: Dare I write more? I think he would not really disapprove. Much has been said that might seem to be praise of him. He would have shrunk from this, none more than he, therefore I must say no more. Let me take you to the source of all his gifts and power, to the place where the power that moved him was generated, for it was not his own. The other day I found his prayer list. It was a revelation to me. He brought his work constantly before God. He prayed for his patients and Chinese labourers regularly and by name. Here are long lists of his relations and friends, even passing acquaintances some of them, arranged to be prayed for regularly—friends of other days, Blackheath, University, and Morningside friends, as well as those of later years—all had their place in his intercession. His colleagues of the same station, of neighbouring stations, of other missions, he prayed for regularly by name, as well as for missions and missionary work of all societies all over the world. The names of many of you who helped him in his work are here. And he prayed for wisdom and direction in the employment of all moneys committed to his charge, whether private money or for mission purposes, always keeping exact and careful accounts of all these. He prayed for his servants too, for some French soldiers he had known, for medical missions, bringing details of his life and work before God, and never forgetting his 'own folk' as he styled them: some of the details of his prayers for whom are deeply affecting.

"I have dared to lift this veil. It is that you may see

the real source of his influence. He was a man of God, a man of prayer; and he prayed to his Father with the humility and simplicity, straightforwardness and unconventionality of a child.

"In Arthur Peill the London Missionary Society in North China has lost not only a highly trained and skilful doctor and an enthusiastic missionary worker, but also a saintly soul, humble as a little child, with the very lowliest opinion of himself, ever seeking for and seeing the good in others, possessed of a patience that never seemed to fail and a confidence in God that was the hourly stay of his life, always putting first things first, caring even more for the healing and saving of the souls of men than for the curing of their bodies, to which he bent all his powers. What his *own folk* have lost—ah, that can never be known but to themselves and God; only his going home has made heaven a more real and desirable place to them than it ever was before, and it seems so much nearer.

Qui procul hinc, the legend's writ,
The frontier grave is far away,
Qui ante diem periit,
Sed miles, sed pro patriâ."

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLERICAL PROFESSION

From studying that highest form of human activity, the work of a medical missionary, it seems a sharp descent to the work of the ministry. For it must be admitted that mankind regards with suspicion and dislike the ministers of religion. *Ecrasez l'infâme* was perhaps the exaggerated Celtic way of expressing the sentiment, but in every country known to us, except perhaps Scotland, the people as a whole look on the priest, the cleric, the minister, as a self-asserting, self-seeking, and possibly self-deluded intruder into the normal life of man. Scotland is a possible exception; for in that country to be a minister is, or was, the ambition of the strongest and best manhood. Yet even in Scotland, the national poet, Robert Burns, wrote, with general approval, *Holy Willie's Prayer*, the most scathing words ever uttered against the spiritual pride and hypocrisy of the clergy. Another great and sincere poet, Robert Browning, has laid bare the godlessness which lurks under the pious garb, in *The Bishop orders his Tomb in St. Praxted's*, and the worldliness which has ingenuity of self-defence in *Bishop Blougram's Apology*. Indeed, the vices of the clergy have been a never-failing subject of satire. And if the *Epistolæ Obscurorun Virorum* tore the veil from the priesthood before the Reformation, these typical poets of the Reformed Religion remind us that the clerical character is in the public eye a constant and not a variant quantity. And in the world of to-day the clerical profession is at such a discount that even in America thousands of pulpits are empty; in England there is grave anxiety how the parishes are to be supplied in the next generation; and the Roman Church only keeps her altars served by taking

young boys and educating them in the seminaries. In short, this unpopularity of the ministry has reached a point which may have the beneficial result of keeping out of it all who are not brought into it by a Divine mandate.

The question is quite pertinent: Is the unpopularity of the ministry, which makes men, and especially young men, instinctively fight shy of the parson, due to the vices or the virtues of the clergy? Does public opinion run against the ministers of Christ because they are bad and unfaithful ministers, trying to make a living out of holy things, pretentious, hypocritical, professing a higher sanctity, while they are no better, or even worse, than other men? Or is the antagonism due to the feeling that these ministers are always reminding us of another world, explicitly or implicitly rebuking our sins, calling us to a spiritual effort which our indolence resents and our vices fiercely refuse?

It would be a great point gained to get an answer to that question; it would be useful both for the ministers and for their critics. Do you dislike, despise, or avoid the clergy, and refuse the thought of joining their ranks with a holy horror, because they are bad, or with a resentment because they are good?

The vices of the clergy deserve all the lashing they get. The spectacle of a John XXIII or an Alexander VI claiming to be the vicegerent of God upon earth, and receiving the homage of deluded millions, is enough to rouse the wrath of men and of God. And even the far milder vices of one of Anthony Trollope's clergy, an absolute worldling in clerical dress, seeking his own comfort, maintaining his own dignity, discharging his formal duties without effort or enthusiasm, courting the rich and influential, neglecting if not despising the poor and the lowly, may well stir the contempt and justify the neglect which the modern world shows to the Church. And so far as the present attitude of men to the ministry is slowly but surely making it an undesirable and unprofitable undertaking to enter the priest's office for a morsel of bread, it is to be welcomed. No greater good could happen to the world than a turn of events which would make it impossible for anyone to enter the ministry from the wrong motive.

Let the wind of criticism blow keenly and even fiercely, until the hypocrite and the self-seeker, and even the unqualified and uncalled, can have no temptation to undertake that onerous task, the cure of souls.

But is the charge of clerical incompetence or hypocrisy merely a pretext, another exhibition of hypocrisy? Is it merely a cover for the true motive? Do men hate the Christian minister because he is good, and calls to goodness, and makes vicious men and women uneasy in his presence?

Several things need to be said, and constantly repeated. There have been and there are still many faithful, devoted and self-sacrificing men in the Christian ministry. These inevitably draw around them grateful and reverent hearts—and that response of those whom they have been permitted to save, or even to help and to lead into the way of life, is a reward so rich and satisfying that, if it could be known to the outsider, it would make all men desire above everything else this holy calling.

But the office is in itself so difficult that the minister needs peculiar help and grace if he is to continue faithful. Strange as it seems, this is the situation in which Christ-likeness is most difficult to get and to retain. And alas, it is so easy to enter this work with a wrong motive, and so inevitable, apart from supernatural grace, to degenerate in it, that the faithful must always seem few in comparison with the unfaithful; the genuine coins are depreciated in the mass of counterfeit.

There have been, yes, and there still are, many devoted, sincere and effective ministers even in this country. A man, or a woman, who should recognise the call and enter into the pastoral work, inherits a great and apostolic succession. In the dawn of our literature, Chaucer drew the portrait of the good pastor:

> Out of the gospel he the wordës caught,
> For first he wrought and afterwards he taught;
> And this precépt he added yet thereto,
> If gold should rust, what should the irèn do?

That poor parson of Chaucer's has had his followers always: the Reformation did not break the succession;

the movements which produced the Free Churches even strengthened it; for one of the strongest elements in those movements was the demand for a ministry pure and free from venality. The contention was that a minister must have a distinct vocation, that he must have a single eye to God's glory in the salvation of men, that he must be an example to his flock and practise all he preaches; the pastor's life, as Philip Henry put it, must be the "book of the ignorant," that those who do not understand his preaching may yet understand what they ought to be by seeing what he is.

Take, for example, Fletcher of Madeley, whose work has remained in memory as the type of what the minister of Christ should be. He was a Swiss by birth, but coming to England in the early years of the Methodist movement, he accepted with absolute devotion that new light, and became a loyal follower of John, and the most affectionate friend of Charles, Wesley. Like so many of God's best ministers, he was drawn even in childhood to religion. "I think it was when I was seven years of age that I first began to feel the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and that I resolved to give myself up to Him, and to serve His Church, if ever I should be fit for it," he said. But the early dews of piety evaporated, and his desire, like that of F. W. Robertson, was to be a soldier. When that plan was frustrated, and he settled in England and came under the influence of Methodism, he underwent a conversion as striking as Augustine's or Bunyan's, and with the same result. "Is it possible," he writes, "that I, who have always been accounted so religious, who have made divinity my study, and received the Premiums of Piety, so called, from the university, for my writings on Divine subjects, is it possible that I should be so ignorant as not to know what faith is?" But it was with him as with Wesley before he met with Böhler the Moravian. His past life, so blameless in the eyes of man, seemed to him exceeding sinful in the eyes of God. He had no foundation in Christ. Gradually the truth came home to him. "I found relief in Mr. Wesley's Journal" (where so many have found it), "where I learned that we should go to Christ with all our

sins and hardness of heart." He was already twenty-six, acting as a tutor to a wealthy family. But he sought ordination, and in 1760 he entered on his life-work as Vicar of Madeley. He chose this place, out of two offered him by his patron, though the salary was only half what the other afforded, because it brought him amongst a degraded and needy population, chiefly of colliers. For twenty-five years he sustained that ministry, interrupted only by ill-health; and the ill-health was brought on partly, as Wesley thought, by his abstemiousness, small and hurried meals, and two nights a week spent without sleep in prayer. He toiled in face of the hostility, often violent, of his parishioners, and subjected to the persecution of his fellow-clergy, who disliked his Methodism, gradually winning his way among the people and drawing his bitterest opponents into the church. Intimate friends knew how authentic his call was: "In the beginning of my spiritual course, I heard the voice of God, in an articulate, but inexpressibly awful, sound, go through my soul in those words: *If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself.*" On another occasion: "I was favoured," he said, "like Moses, with a supernatural discovery of the glory of God, in an ineffable converse with Him face to face; so that whether I was in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell."

The soldier spirit was with him to the end. Like Paul, he fought a good fight. Returning to his native place, Nyon, in Switzerland, for his health, he had a perilous interview with a nephew, a young debauchee who had been drummed out of a Sardinian regiment and returned home to be a terror to his family. One uncle, General de Gous, this desperado forced into giving him a draft with a loaded pistol at his head. Passing the door of his uncle Fletcher, he called in and showed him the draft for five hundred crowns; Fletcher saw that something was wrong, for he knew that De Gous was not rich. He took the draft, and putting it in his pocket, said: "It strikes me that you have come by this improperly; I cannot in honesty return it to you till I have my brother's approbation." The nephew drew his pistol, and putting it at his

uncle's breast swore that he would have his life if he did not immediately return him the draft. "My life," replied Fletcher, "is secure in the hands of God." And when the young man still threatened: "Do you think that I have been twenty-five years the minister of the Lord of life, to be afraid of death now? It is for you to fear death, who have every reason to fear it. A gambler, a cheat, a seducer, a duellist, look there; the eye of God is upon us. Tremble in the presence of your Maker." The ruffian was cowed by his uncle's lofty courage. Then Fletcher spoke compassionately and offered to do what he could to extricate him from his difficulties. He then knelt down and prayed for his nephew. Every true minister of Christ is a good soldier.

It was during his prolonged stay in Switzerland that he wrote down his creed and the substance of his teaching in a letter to a friend:—

"The truths I chiefly insist upon, when I talk to the people who will hear me, are those which I feed upon myself, as my daily bread: God, our Maker and Preserver, though invisible, is here and everywhere. He is our chief good, because all beauty and all goodness centres in and flows from Him. He is specially love; and love in us, being His image, is the sum and substance of all moral and spiritual excellence—of all true and lasting bliss. In Adam we are all estranged from love and from God; but the second Adam, Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, is come to make us know and enjoy again our God as the God of love and the chief Good. All who receive Jesus receive power to become the sons of God."

Late in life he married one whom he had respected and loved for many years; and it is with this devoted wife that the closing passage of the life is connected. The summer of 1785 was unhealthy at Madeley. A putrid fever raged, and the two of them were much engaged with the sufferers, two of whom died within a few yards of the vicarage. Mrs. Fletcher caught the fever, and "Now I had a fresh instance," she said, "of the tender care and love of my blessed partner; sickness was made pleasant by his kind attention." On Thursday, August 4th, the pastor was busy

among his flock from three in the afternoon until nine. On returning he said he had taken cold, and for two days went about his work with difficulty. On Sunday they entreated him not to attempt to preach; but he felt he must try. During the prayers he almost fainted, and his wife pressed through the crowd (for the church was always crowded when he preached) and pressed him to give it up. He gently resisted; the windows were opened; he gave out his text: "How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God; therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings." After the sermon he went to the communion table, saying: "I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim, beneath the mercy seat." The people were deeply affected: nearly all were in tears. But it was the end. For three days he lay restless in body, but in mind calm and joyful, occasionally murmuring, "God is love; God is love." This he was still able to say when speech was failing and he could say nothing else. The fatal spots appeared. On Saturday afternoon he reached out his hands to his friends, and his wife said to him: "My dear, if Jesus is very present with thee, lift thy right hand." He did so. "If the prospect of glory opens before thee, repeat the sign." He raised his right hand again, and yet again.

On Sunday evening the church was filled with a weeping congregation, and at the close of the service the people lingered about the vicarage and could not go home. Some of them were admitted to the house and allowed to see him through the open door of his room. At half-past ten, August 14, 1785, he breathed his last. He was only fifty-six; but Fletcher of Madeley had become a name to express the pastor whom Chaucer had depicted four centuries before.

If all ministers of Christ were like him, the reproach of the clergy would probably cease. There would still be the opposition of the godless before they were won, and the neglect of those who seek their portion only in this life. But men for the most part would agree, and indeed have agreed, that such a ministry is worthy of all admiration, and might well be imitated by all who have the gift.

To make the ministry acceptable and desirable among men, these conditions are needed : First, the clear call from heaven ; second, the complete surrender of worldly ambition and especially of the love of money ; third, a life of habitual self-denial and prayer : fourth, a love of men and a passion to save them ; last, faithfulness unto death.

How many ministers who fulfil these conditions are among us to-day, we cannot tell. But there are enough to be the salt of society, enough to keep the lofty ideal before the Church, enough to justify the judgment that the Christian ministry at its best is the best calling that can come to a man.

How rich and satisfying a minister's life may be in this modern world may be illustrated by four examples, Andrew Bonar, Phillips Brooks, R. W. Dale and Robert Reynolds. Bonar, the brother of the famous hymn-writer, carried on a great ministry in Glasgow, where he was the spring of all movements for the saving of men. How loved and venerated he was by his contemporaries ! He has not, like his brother, left behind him hymns which will be sung by many generations : but to his own generation he was a " father in God " ; the old evangelical piety seemed to reach a climax in him more than in McCheyne, whom he so ardently admired. If one might be an Andrew Bonar, who would wish to be anything else ? How could life be more joyous, more useful, more beneficent ?

Or Phillips Brooks : who ever in the world's history lived a life of such buoyant and abounding activity, as he pushed his generation upwards and onwards ? In front of Trinity Church, Boston, which was built for him, stands a noble statue of him not altogether unworthy. He is still speaking to Boston and the world ; and behind him stands his Lord and Master, telling him what to say. He began life as a Unitarian ; and as Latin master in a school he was a failure, and his principal foretold for him failure through life. But he found Christ, or Christ found him ; and then his gift of utterance came to him. He stood in the pulpit, a veritable giant, and read off those marvellous sermons at a great rate, until his audience was carried away in the mighty rush of thoughts and passionate emotions.

It was titanic. All through his life his power grew ; he became ever more human, more humble, more lovable. By a happy chance some one overheard this great soul in prayer (see p. 30).

I chanced to be in Boston just after his death in 1893. Was ever a man so missed ? The city, the Church, the University at Cambridge, all seemed bereft.

Once the Boston paper had entered as a paragraph of news : " Phillips Brooks was seen walking down Booksellers' Row ; everyone smiled." His sermons may live, as F. W. Robertson's have lived, into a second or third generation. But it must never be forgotten what a minister of Christ could be to the English-speaking race in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Dale of Birmingham is remembered as a great citizen, a great theologian, a great orator. But he was before and above all things a good minister of Jesus Christ. Once, when he and Chamberlain were engaged in forming the noble municipal life of the Midland city, Chamberlain was taunted in the House with simply representing Dale. " If that be true," he retorted, " I represent the most intelligent constituency in the country." As a writer he reached the world of literature as well as that of religion. I remember him telling me with grave amusement how Dr. Gott had written a book for the clergy, in which he discountenanced all co-operation with Nonconformists, but in the books recommended as essential were Dale's *Atonement* and his *Ephesians*. On the platform, especially in Birmingham itself, he carried a weight seldom equalled. It was not the speech that affected his audience so much as the speaker. His statue stands in the Birmingham Art Gallery, because he was a great citizen, but his portrait survives in the Life written by his son, Sir Alfred Dale, a memorable picture of what a Christian minister can be to his city, to his nation, and to mankind. He declined the title of Reverend, but is the more revered. He refused a clerical garb, but he stands out as the greatest, or among the greatest, of the clergy in the Victorian Age.

Reynolds comes in a different category. After a remarkable and successful ministry in Leeds, he was called

to be the principal of Cheshunt, and there he formed and sent out several generations of ministers, who cherished his memory with untold reverence and love. He had all the qualities of a saint, humility and humour, boundless sympathies and unfailing love of God. The story of his life, edited by his sisters, is one of the most beautiful books ever written. Those of us who could not study under him at Cheshunt have been permitted to breathe the rare atmosphere in which he lived and worked through this exquisite biography. He was a poet, who instead of writing poetry made men and ministers, a worthy branch of *poesis*, and continued at that work on some lowly ledge of Parnassus until he was translated. But what vein of exalted thought and of felicitous language was in him is shown by his sonnet on a kindred spirit, Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster :—

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

As bird of calm, poised high on outstretched wing
  Upon the ether thick with angry spray
  And black with storm, he faced the stormy day
Presaging sunrise ; nor did he cease to sing,
  Amid the pulses of the hurricane,
  Of righteousness and peace the eternal reign ;
Till ever and anon the jubilant ring
  Of that heraldic voice filled half the world.
He from high vantage hailed the rising sun,
  Beheld the raven wings of darkness furled ;
Nor could he hush his joy for victory won.
Right on and through the storm our bird of Jove,
  With olive leaf in mouth, has passed to brood
  In summer seas, and live on heavenly food
Amid the throng of those who greatly love.

July 1881.

That is an imperfect sonnet, but a perfect poem. It is the whole heart of Henry Robert Reynolds, as we knew him. He has left on our minds for ever the sense of the tranquil beauty, as Phillips Brooks left the sense of the victorious rush, of the ministerial life.

But these are *præclara nomina* ; is it fair to describe the career of a minister in terms of the few eminent and notably successful men ? It is perhaps a misfortune that successful

work in the ministry, like that of public entertainers, attracts too much contemporary notice, to be followed by sudden silence and swift oblivion. But there are happy and soul-satisfying ministries which attract little but local attention, and leave records, if anywhere, only in heaven. I chanced to come upon such a ministry a short time ago in a small town very near to London. The minister was celebrating his fiftieth anniversary in that one place. The town seemed to gather to rejoice with him ; messages poured in from his old boys in different parts of the world. He was surrounded with those who had known him and respected him all their lives. He could not cease wondering and praising God that he had been so blessed. He had lived in absolute solitude, but among his people ; there had never been any quarrels or misunderstandings ; after fifty years he was drawing the young generation, and might go on with unabated eagerness for years to come. I was curious to know the secret of this influence. It seemed to lie in two things : he was always doing acts of unostentatious kindness, and he was always preaching Christ with the same enthusiasm ; the evangelic note and appeal were never wanting in his sermons.

In contemplating this wonderful and yet little-known ministry, I recalled what that wise observer of life, Benjamin Jowett, the Master of Balliol, said : He thought there was no career in life more useful and fortunate than that of a Nonconformist minister, if only the man is free from worldly ambition.

But for continuance, and for ending the course with joy, a man is greatly dependent, partly on his own self-discipline, partly on his people, and mostly on God. Self-seeking, self-indulgence, self-absorption, turn the work into bitterness, in the end make it useless. Only a single eye, a pure love to God and an unaffected love of humanity make the work successful, or even tolerable to the worker. Unfortunately, this is a calling which draws in the spurious too easily. It seems so easy to talk, easier still to read prayers and perform the outward offices. There is an attraction in the stipend, the vicarage, the manse, the freedom to follow one's own bent, without uncomfortable

control or dictation. And young men seek a berth in "The Church," as it is called absurdly, when they are not fit for anything else; or glib talkers accept pulpits, when they have no store of knowledge, no tact, no staying power. Disappointed and disillusionised, these spurious ministers of Christ poison the air with their complaints and bring reproach on Christ's work and Church.

Where coin is easily counterfeited, the genuine coin is discredited. And when the base coin is discovered and nailed to the counter, we can but hang our heads in shame. The gibes and reproaches of the world cannot be answered and must be patiently borne. But the ministry of Christ, for one who has the qualifications, for one who is called by God and sustained by His Spirit, is desirable beyond all other callings. For this man gives his life unreservedly not to gain anything for himself, but to minister to others. Sustained and gladdened by Christ's presence, he is trying always to bring everyone into that presence. He is permitted, nay required, to live in prayer and to be much with God. The unsearchable treasures of the Bible are his occupation, to discover, to mine them, to use and to impart them; that occupation grows more amazing, more satisfying, every year. All experiences, all events, all books, all arts, come to his hand to be concentrated on the one work. The very trials and losses and disappointments contribute. His life is unified in that one holy and exalting purpose, to bring the Bread of Heaven to perishing men; and all is grist that comes into his mill. This can hardly be said of any other calling. And then he is rewarded with a love and gratitude from his fellows which always seem to him out of all proportion to what he has done. "He shall receive a hundredfold in this present life," said the Master. And so it is. The gratitude of human souls to anyone who has broken the bread of life to them, or

> Shown them the high white star of truth,
> There bade them gaze and there aspire—

the love which those show to one who has brought them to Christ: this gratitude and this love are the richest rewards that life on earth offers to us.

CHAPTER IX

THE PROFESSION OF AMUSEMENT

THE place of amusement, diversion, recreation in life needs constant reconsideration. It forms a large part of the life of mankind—whether or not it is too large we should ask ourselves constantly. It employs a very considerable part of the labour of the world. Those engaged in it should be considered. The bearing of religion upon them, the message of Christ to them, the possibilities of Christlikeness for them, should not be left to haphazard. Do we as citizens give a due consideration to this part of the national life? Do we as Christians take the right attitude to amusements and the purveyors of amusement, the actors and artists who give their whole time and talent to amuse the public?

The industry of amusement in the modern world is greater than it ever was before, because rapidity of production gives more margin for mere recreation, and the same rapidity makes the need of it for the workers the more pressing.

In the United States the industry of the cinema is larger than any other with the exception of the railways. That country is the most industrial, the most commercial, the most productive in the world; and yet, next to its concern for transport, its greatest business is amusement, and only one form of amusement. Theatres, music, games, watering places, health resorts, are in addition. It is the same in our own country and in most of the other civilized countries of the world. Amusement is a great business, an industry, an occupation, and it completely claims the lives of millions of our people. If you chance to be near a racecourse at some great national meeting, you see a vast population gathered from all over the country. For

many of us it is another world within the world in which we live. The faces, the manners, the language, are all peculiar. The thought, the interest, the human energy, the money concentrated on this event, which is unproductive and economically useless, or even injurious, compel you to recognise that this is a very appreciable part of human life. A football match is hardly less important. Sixty thousand people will assemble to watch it; the evening papers are waited for by eager crowds all over the country to see the result. The queues at the doors of the theatres and music-halls all over the land are a constant reminder of what really interests the people.

The leisured classes devote much, most, sometimes all, of their leisure to amusements. Bridge, golf, the theatre, dances, motor riding, visiting Monte Carlo. Their life is mainly gaming.

Nor is this a modern symptom, an outcome of our intense industrial life. In the ancient world the games played a similar part, and strange to say the older civilisations have handed down to us as their best gift to posterity the outcome of their games. In Greece the great national festivals were the Olympic games, and time was reckoned by them in Olympiads; the Nemean or Isthmian games were hardly less important. All the States of that brilliant peninsula strove in the games, and their simple crowns were coveted as the greatest honour that life had to offer. Pindar celebrated the victors in Odes; and "our Pindar's burning goals" echo in poetry down to this day. It was out of the Greek theatre that the masterpieces of Greek literature arose, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes. It was from the games of the Palæstra that Greek sculpture attained its unsurpassed perfection. Religion and the games made Phidias and Praxiteles and Myron. The theatre grew out of the worship of Dionysus. His theatre on the slope, and the Parthenon, the Erechtheum, and the Propylæa, on the summit, of the Acropolis, remain even in their ruins as the monument of the union of these two strands of the life of man, his religion and his recreation. They find their harmony in Art. Does the religion consecrate the amusement? Does the amusement desecrate the

religion? These questions lead us to the very heart of the subject.

It is curious that Judaism gave next to no attention to amusements. In Jerusalem there were no theatres or stadia, only a Temple. And Christianity, which sprang out of Judaism, seemed equally indifferent to that lighter side of life. Moreover, at the dawn of the Christian era, the amusements of the Græco-Roman world were corrupt. When Tertullian wrote his treatise *De Spectaculis* he had before him shows that were not only imbued with pagan worship, but stained with cruelty and vice. Thus in sheer reaction the Church started on her career with a puritanic zeal, condemning the theatres which were dark with impurity and the amphitheatre which was red with blood.

The truth is, Christianity broke into the world as a dazzling light, revealing an eternal life beyond the grave. In that light human life seemed brief and serious. What were the games of the stadium, when a heavenly race demanded the athletic energy of the soul? Who could care for the theatre, with its paltry comedies and lewd pantomimes, when there was a *θέατρον* of so different a kind to be seen, the Apostles set forth as a spectacle of heroic endurance in declaring to the world its Saviour and the Cross on which He died?

The alliance of the games with a religion which was pagan, made a religion which was Christian stand aloof from them. But it committed that religion to find out amusements which should be Christian. And when the drama revived, it came again in the form of Moralities and Miracle Plays.

But the Puritanism inherent in Christianity has found it hard to deal wisely with this question of amusements; and in England especially Puritanism had to fight a stern battle almost as hard as that fought against the old paganism by the early Church. Under Elizabeth the theatre, as even Shakespeare's plays remind us, was still impure: in the Restoration it was worse; the plays of Congreve and Wycherley and even Dryden betray an almost complete privation of moral light—with all their wit and even wisdom they move in a world where morality has ceased to count.

And pure religion could only win its way as a protest against amusements as they were, waiting a better day when it might secure amusements as they ought to be. Surely that better day has come.

The Church at first expected the second Advent at an early date. That expectation was disappointed; and Christianity had to settle down to its task in an order which was to last for centuries. While devout believers might live as if the Lord might return at any time, they had to conduct their own lives and those of their children, and the whole ordering of society, on the supposition of a world which would continue as it was. Recreation from labour was necessary. Instinct demanded relief from the pressure of life in games and amusements. Even in the early days of fervour, the story went that St. John was found once by a young hunter amusing himself with a tame quail, and John's reply to the astonishment of one who could not believe that an apostle could take amusement was: "Why is the bow on thy shoulder unstrung?" "Because," said the hunter, "if it were kept taut it would lose its spring." "For the same reason," said the apostle, "I play with this bird." And the Church had to recognise that it was against nature, and therefore against God, to forbid the amusements which are necessary for efficiency in work, and furthermore that it was not in harmony with the spirit of Christ to hinder the innocent joys which come from the instincts implanted in us by the Creator. Christ watched the children playing in the market-place with sympathy. Children play as kittens and all young things do. And old people are only children in their Father's eyes: they too have an instinct to sport; they want to sing, to wrestle, to run, to chase, to hunt, to act, to declaim. These instincts may be christianised; but the attempt to suppress them only has the result of unchristianising them. They remain as sources of corruption, though their healthy indulgence would produce greater efficiency as well as pleasure.

Thus we are brought to the task which has been too long neglected or only half attempted—the task of making our amusements Christian; the task of inducing our

amusers to be Christian. We have to bring our amusements within the pale of the Church, showing that so far from opposing them the Church welcomes them as part of human life, necessary to all times, more necessary than ever in the exciting and taxing life of to-day. We have to welcome those who amuse us as members of the Church, not only to recognise them as Christians, but to help them to make their art or their craft Christian in a direct and appreciable way.

Not the suppression, but the christianisation of amusement is our watchword. The theatre can be Christian; actors and actresses can be devout Christians, The racecourse can be Christian; jockeys and trainers can be, and more than any others ought to be, Christians. The ring can be Christian; and men who undertake to amuse the public by boxing require in a peculiar degree the Spirit of Christ, that they may fight without malice, may be magnanimous in victory and courageous in defeat. The same may be said about all forms of amusement; they can be Christian; the purveyors of them, and those who enjoy them, should alike be Christian. Our aim should be to have places of amusement which, instead of competing with places of worship, supplement them; in which it would at no time be incongruous for those present in their enjoyment to begin praising God.

To set religion and amusement in opposition, to make the one inconsistent with the other, however pure the intention may have been, has worked disastrously. It has driven amusement into vice and religion into dullness, which is itself a vice. It has made people, especially the young, think that they have to choose between the two. The great truth that the love of the Father cannot consist with the love of the world has been perverted, as if a Father's love did not include amusement for His children. And it is one of the hopeful signs of our times that the opposition is dying away.

As religion begins to approve of amusement, amusement begins to desire religion. Art intervenes to reconcile the opposing principles. The alliance between the gods and the drama in Greece begins to reappear in Christendom

with significant changes. In the Ober-Ammergau play the highest mystery of Christianity is presented as a drama, with unspeakable reverence and spiritual results. *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* becomes a presentation of Christ in modern life. *Everyman* is a great sermon. And all through the work of dramatists, theatre directors and actors begins to appear a new spirit, a recognition that this amusement, which makes so inexhaustible an appeal to human nature, may not only be pure and innocent, but can quite naturally take its part in the elevation and ennobling of mankind.

The time has come when the Church should make it clear that the purveyors of the people's amusement not only may, but should be Christians. There always have been striking examples of marked goodness in the class of those who amuse. In the eighteenth century Peg Woffington was as famous for her unaffected charity and practical goodness as Mrs. Siddons was for her unrivalled gifts as an actress. Garrick, with all his vanity, was essentially good. And this was at a time when the profession of a player was hardly reputable, and even an unconventional literary and artistic circle like that of Dr. Johnson was conscious of some condescension in admitting an actor into its borders. Indeed, in the early half of the nineteenth century the Keans and the Kembles and the Macreadys were accepted for their genius, in spite of their profession. And yet Fanny Kemble was a Christian with a yearning passion for good things and a faith which reached out to the Eternal World. Jenny Lind, too, the famous Swede who for many years dominated the operatic stage, was a shining example of a Christian life maintained in the midst of many temptations. To-day the status of the players has been raised; the leading actors are regularly knighted, and their profession is in public estimate quite on a level with the learned professions. And the popular judgment is right. Men and women who have special gifts of voice and mind, the mimetic power which makes a good actor, or the mental vigour which can interpret great plays, and use those gifts to delight and uplift their fellow-creatures, deserve all the honour they receive. Their gifts may be regarded as gifts

of the Spirit, and when the source of these gifts is recognised they can be used to help their wearied and depressed neighbours as effectually as the doctor or the parson. Santley was for many years a singer in churches, and his voice conveyed to men the message of Divine love. I remember one Good Friday hearing Clara Butt at the Queen's Hall sing a simple song, "It's quiet down here," with extraordinary effect; the closing words in her deep and melodious voice, like the chiming of a great bell, subdued and penetrated all hearts: "But God is very near." And Sir Harry Lauder is not only the most popular humorist on the music-hall stage, but he is universally recognised as a strong and wholesome influence for all that is good and true.

Let us frankly say that we expect our dramatists, actors, singers, acrobats, and all who profess and call themselves amusers, to bring to us, to all whom they attract, not only moral but spiritual influences. The mediæval tale of Our Lady's Player is of general application: he, not knowing how to glorify God in words or hymns, spread his mat before the altar and went through all his acrobatic feats in the silence of the night, to the glory of God. So may every one who performs, if he will—if she will—do all to the glory of God and the high edification of men.

There is always some fear lest if entertainments were all good they would cease to be amusing. And, no doubt, if performers attempted in any sense to preach through their performance the public would resent it and stay away: the public go not to be preached to, but to be amused. But it is this amusement itself which is to be regarded as essentially religious. The relaxation of mirth, the play of wit, the successful characterisation of life, the genial satire, the profound interpretation of great ideas, all the elements which are, or should be, offered to amuse the public are, so I am contending, within the plan of God, and may be presented in the spirit and power of Christ. It is a misunderstanding which puts this part of life in a dubious position. And the broader view of things which we are gradually attaining corrects this misunderstanding. God made humour as well as gravity. God regards laughter and tears with an equal sympathy. And if sin and re-

demption from sin come on the grave and tearful side of life, and the world's Redeemer moved along the Way of the Cross, through the Valley of Weeping, the same God who gave us Christ gives us joy: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. He gives us all things richly to enjoy. He would forgive and put away our sins by the Cross, on purpose that we may break out into singing. The merriment and the shouting, the high spirits, the exaltation of a great holiday are in His design. We dishonour Him by sour looks and unnatural gravity; we honour Him with happy laughter and thrills of innocent joy.

Games are undoubtedly good, and the organisation of them is an important part of human life. Why are they viewed with suspicion? Why should they be under the frown of religion? Intrinsically they are good; the evil comes in when they take too much of life and prevent us from doing the necessary duties and from fulfilling the larger claims of life. Or they are marred by the introduction of avarice; when that element enters, the game becomes a gamble, and gambling is corruption.

It is very difficult to draw the line. But it is the standard of Christ which enables us to draw it. In no department of life is His presence more desirable than in our amusements. He makes the amusement more amusing, but He stops it from being excessive. His recognised authority prevents the game from becoming a gamble. It is well worth while to follow this out a little further. I remember when Moody was conducting his great Mission in London—I think it was in 1875—and eager throngs and the vast meetings in the Agricultural Hall were exhausting his physical power, he might often be found in the afternoon playing, and intensely enjoying, a game of croquet. He was as eager to get his ball through the hoops and to reach the post as he was to win souls to Christ. That memory keeps before my mind the plain truth that amusement which helps us to do Christ's work in the world must be Christlike. On the other hand, amusement which prevents us altogether from doing His work, and still more clearly an amusement which diverts us from doing any solid work

in life, must be unchristlike and, however innocent in itself, mischievous. The mischief of cards or billiards or football or golf does not lie in the game itself, but in the seductive attraction which these games exercise; to play them or even to watch them draws men away from necessary business, makes them neglect worship and Christian service, and, in a word, degrades life from its high and noble seriousness into a mere game. It is this extravagance and exaggeration which constitute the danger; it is Christ's presence which counteracts it.

Gambling is the term established by custom for gaming which has been corrupted by the introduction of a money element. Play for recreation and amusement is a very important part of life; but bring into the play the wish to win money from others, money which by the very nature of the case is unearned—that is, no equivalent service or benefit is rendered for it—and gambling appears. It has always been very difficult to show convincingly that gambling is wrong; and it flourishes and obtains an increasing hold on widening circles of society, because it is not decisively condemned by religion, by law, or by the popular judgment.

In its extreme form, as for instance at the gaming tables at Monte Carlo, it is not to be questioned that we have one of the most ruinous passions by which men and women are torn. John Addington Symonds has a passage which flashes the truth on the eye and on the conscience of the reader:—

"At night from Roccabrana you may see the flaring gas-lamps of the gaming house at Monaco, that Armida's garden of the nineteenth century. It is the sunniest and most sheltered spot of all the coast. Long ago Lucan said of Monaco,

Non Corus in illum jus habet aut Zephyrus:

Winter never comes to nip its tangled cactuses and aloes and geraniums. The air swoons with the scent of lemon-groves; tall palm-trees wave their graceful branches by the shore; music of the softest and the loudest swells from the palace; cool corridors and sunny seats stand ready for the noontide heat or evening calm; without are olive-

gardens green and fresh and full of flowers. But the witch herself holds her high court and never-ending festival of sin in the painted banquet halls and among the green tables." [1]

By a clear moral instinct the term gambling-*hell* is given to any place where this witch holds her court. And yet the whole machinery of gambling is allowed to operate on society. The bookmaker and the betting ring on the racecourse, the bookmaker at the street corners and in the factories, the bookmaker enabling even children to put their money on horses, is a recognised constituent of modern society. He is within certain limits allowed by law to profit by man's gambling propensity. He is even regarded as a benefactor, a legitimate purveyor of amusement, by multitudes of people who avail themselves of his help. Gambling in sweepstakes, in cards, and even in simple expedients which are sold in the streets, is an admitted form of amusement.

What is so obviously bad in its final development at Monaco cannot be good in its beginnings. Mankind fights desperately against the tiger full-grown and bloodthirsty; why does it cherish the cub in its early days?

What is clearly wanted is a definite and indubitable principle which will oppose the beginnings of that which, developed, is so admittedly pernicious. *Obsta principiis.*

Can one by any stretch of imagination picture Christ gambling? We have no difficulty in imagining him at play as a child—as He watched the children playing in the market-place, when He was grown up. But we could not conceive Him playing a game for money and pocketing the stakes. Judas might have put money on a horse, but not Jesus. The reason is that His whole attitude to money was cold and critical. He called it by the name of a supposed idol, Mammon; he set it in sharp antagonism to God. The wage, we may surmise from His parables, was due to the worker; but the desire to get more, the demand that a brother should divide the inheritance, left Him unmoved. What was necessary for subsistence He would accept, for the labourer is worthy of his hire. But the idea of taking money from others by the turn of a roulette-table, or by

[1] *Sketches in Italy*, "The Cornice," p. 19.

a successful use of cards, or any other gambling device, could not possibly consist with any notion we can form of Him.

There was a story told of Romaine, the great leader in the Evangelical revival, that he was at a party, and the hostess invited him to sit down at the card-table. He responded with alacrity: "Certainly, madam, if we may first ask God's blessing on it." "Pray at a card-table!" exclaimed the lady, with pious horror. "Then I could hardly play," said Romaine.

No; it is that which constitutes the essence of gambling, the wish to get money for which no service is rendered, to get it under a specious pretence of amusement, to get it by a code of honour which is unsupported by law or by right—it is that covetousness which is wholly inconceivable in Christ. If, therefore, Christ's standard were accepted, games would continue, but they would never pass into gambling; men and women might devote their talents to the refreshment and amusement of their fellows; but there would be no bookmakers, no gambling-hells; and the Prince of Monaco would draw his revenue and maintain his state by honest production, and not by the revelry of the witch's table.

If Christ's authority were accepted, games would flourish and would be more delightful and recreative than ever; but that poison in them which ruins so many would be extracted.

CHAPTER X

ART

PHILOSOPHY has in our time come to recognise art in the handsomest way. Eucken treats of it among the spiritual forces which govern human life, parallel if not directly connected with morals and religion. Benedetto Croce has given it a place which accords it a supremacy over both. No thinker since Hegel would ever dream of omitting æsthetic in his investigation of human nature and of life. Strange to say, religion is more churlish and dubious in its attitude to art. There is, and always has been, a Puritan strain in Christianity which is inclined to regard beauty as a snare and the pursuit of it as pagan. The result has been to throw artists frequently into an anti-religious attitude.

This is all the more perverse, for art, so far as we know, originates in religion, and declines when its connection with its source is cut. Professor Alessandro della Seta, Professor of Archæology at the University of Genoa, has written a book on art and religion which traces the connection from the beginning to modern times. The first efforts at artistic presentation were dictated by the desire to present to the gods votive offerings: the next were devoted to representing the gods themselves, the next aimed at rearing suitable shrines. In Egypt a great, though circumscribed, art was produced in order to commend the dead to the other world. The monuments of that art fill us with wonder, at once for the lasting power of the work and for the poverty and superstition of the underlying thought. The arts of Greece, poetry, drama, sculpture, architecture, were in their origin entirely religious, and achieved their triumphs in the Parthenon, the Erechtheum and the statue of Athene in ivory and marble, the work of Phidias.

Christian art began in the Catacombs, reached a perfection in the mosaics of Ravenna or of St. Mark's at Venice ; and then began again in the Renaissance, and reached another perfection in Tintoretto, Fra Angelico, Michael Angelo.

But reaction has always come when art ministers to idolatry. The principle which lies at the root of Judaism, that no image of God shall ever be attempted, reasserts itself in every age of Christianity. The iconoclasts and the Puritans are ever on the watch against abuses. The Church has been the patron and the inspiration of the noblest art which the world has produced hitherto. Her buildings, St. Sophia, St. Mark's, St. Peter's, Strassburg, Amiens, Chartres, are the noblest that man has been able to build. She has produced music, poetry, painting. And if idolatry has crept in and the corruption of the best has become the worst, the remedy lies not in suppressing art, but in making it Christlike. Considering the influence of art, its essential place in human nature, its possibilities, its intrinsic value, we may confidently say that a supreme need of our times is to encourage art, to cherish all the artistic genius that is manifested in our population, to bring art into its right relation to life, and to subject it to the master-influence, which is the Spirit of Christ.

Until quite recently it has been assumed that the object of art was to recognise and to discover beauty, and by finding expression for it to assimilate human life and character to it. Art which was not in search of the Beautiful would have seemed a contradiction in terms. But a movement has arisen which, under various names, would put beauty in a subordinate position, and certainly would not define art in terms of it. The followers of the new cult aim, it is said, at self-expression. Art should be defined as self-expression, not as the expression of Beauty. I visited a gallery in which the works of these new painters and sculptors were exhibited. Unfortunately, I had not shaken off the traditional belief that art is concerned with beauty ; and I received a severe shock. Neither picture nor statue gave any suggestion of beauty. The faces and forms were distorted and grotesque ; the colours were dull or crude, never harmonised ; the bits of scenery were devoid of charm ; the

pictures had neither subject nor object; the statues were deliberately and intentionally ugly. Even the human form was painted, it appeared, only to show how offensive it could be; nude females lay about in unpleasant postures, ugly from head to foot, the colour of the flesh as repulsive as the forms of the body. Only in two or three instances had the painters, in depicting a bunch of flowers or a plant, stumbled into Beauty: but these fair blossoms looked incongruous among the representation of unpleasant human faces and figures and the dull flatness of landscapes from which the beauty had been extracted. This was the result of making art self-expression instead of the expression of beauty. This was the self-expression of the artists; they were showing in paint or in sculpture what was in them, the kind of people they were, their mental and spiritual furniture, their relation of antagonism to this beautiful world.

Oddly enough, the visitors to the gallery did in a way justify the pictures, had some likeness or relation to the pictures, and showed that in there volts and extravagances of the modern world we may yet see a cult of ugliness.

But art, we may assume, will repudiate this perversion, and the ingrained passion for beauty will reassert itself. The intrinsic beauty of things will again captivate the heart of man and recall the artist to his ancient quest.

All that we know of God may be summed up in three words, the Good, the True, the Beautiful. However we may account for the Bad, the False and the Foul, we are sure it is not of God. Christ settled this for us with an irresistible and convincing argument which consists of His own Person and Character. The Good, the True, the Beautiful are God. And God is ever subduing and transforming all that is in opposition to His own intrinsic nature. As far as the Good and the True are concerned, there has been in the Church a general agreement. No Christian ever doubted but that God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity or that He is, whatever else He may be, what Matthew Arnold defined as "the stream of tendency not ourselves that makes for righteousness"; no Christian questions that God is the True; "He Himself is the best poet, and the Real

is His song," as Mrs. Browning said; but it has been a far more difficult task to identify God with beauty, and consequently, though art has originated in religion, artists have too frequently strayed from God, and are for the most part strangely shy in identifying their work with the Being who is its true object and inspiration. Here, even the philosophers, Eucken and Croce, have not given any help; for they either separate the Beautiful from the Good and the True, or they substitute it for God; thus they seem to justify the aloofness from God which has so often been the artistic attitude, might we say, the artistic pose.

It would be a great service rendered to the world's life if some strong thinker could show, not only how essential Art is to human welfare in the highest sense, but that it is essential precisely because it is an expression of God, an expression of an aspect of God which is in complete harmony with the other aspects, the Good and the True. The poets of Israel recognised this side of the Divine nature: "One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord" (Ps. xxvii. 4). "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us, yea the work of our hands, establish thou it" (Ps. xc. 17).

This might seem to suggest the whole labour and scope of the artist, the work of whose hand should be to set forth, according to its cunning and skill, the Beauty that is God. But, such is the one-sidedness of human nature, the Hebrew genius shirked that application and left the task to the Greek, who had a much stronger perception of beauty than of God, and from whom the beauty of holiness was hidden. "The Lord of hosts shall be for a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people" (Is. xxviii. 5); "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty" (Is. xxxiii. 17). And these same poets had the most startling sense of the beauty of the world as the vesture of God. Very much of the charm of the Old Testament lies in its magnificent descriptions of Nature, and the sense which it gives the reader throughout of the universe which declares the glory of God, a universe which is His handiwork, a universe which though it can express only

parts of His ways, is yet in all its parts an evidence not only of Power and of Wisdom, but also of Beauty. If Judaism did not, in its fear of idolatry, produce art, it was due to its defects and not to its genius. Directly the embargo on plastic art was removed in Christianity, the writings of the Old Testament inspired the glory of architecture, of painting, of sculpture, of music, which culminated in the Renaissance; but passed on, and is still passing on, to new and perhaps greater achievements.

But however religion hesitates to give visible representation of the Beauty of the Lord, it can never hesitate to recognise in the Beauty of earth and skies and stars an appeal of the Divine Nature, a kind of self-portraiture of the Invisible Creator, that is to be recognised in reverence and devoutly loved.

Beauty is everywhere, if only the eyes are open. Eyes that miss it should acknowledge the fault in themselves. Here in the breaking spring are the leaves of that commonest of trees, the sycamore. When the tree is in full foliage, those leaves in their sober green, and in their somewhat ragged form, may not claim a conspicuous place among the trees of the wood. But look at the birth of those leaves as they unfold from the dark, rough boughs of winter; they are like delicately embossed bronze; there is a glittering sheen upon them; they emerge as a surprise of loveliness, as if revealing a hidden source of artistic joy in a creative mind; they pause, as it were, for a few days in this new world to which they have come with their message, before they unfold and pass into the light of common day.

What tree or flower that has not this surprise of beauty directly it is closely observed? What organic form is there which does not wrest the same confession from the human mind? Job sees God in the whale and in Behemoth, the greatest of the beasts. Fabre sees Him equally in the tiniest of the insects: "When that venerable nonagenarian was being fêted, one of his visitors asked him the question: 'Do you believe in God?' To which he replied emphatically: 'I can't say I believe in God; I *see* Him. Without Him I understand nothing; without Him all is darkness. Not only have I retained this conviction; I have *aggravated*

or *ameliorated* it, whichever you please. Every period has its manias. I regard Atheism as a mania. It is the malady of the age. You could take my skin from me more easily than my faith in God.' " [1]

Artists are liable to study from the malady of the age. An atheistic age insensibly falls into the cult of ugliness. Beauty in the world which does not connect itself with the beauty of God is apt to wither on the severed stalk.

We want then, and want more than we realise, a great company of artists, who in the first place believe in Beauty, perceive it, try to express it, not in pictures and statues only to be hung or exhibited, but in the houses and streets and squares where they are to be placed, and not in the visible only but in the audible, not in the audible only but in the Spiritual. And therefore our artists must have, in the second place, a profound conviction that Beauty comes from God, because He is Beauty, and that He has ordained them and equipped them, given them the sensitive eye and ear and beauty in their soul, on purpose that they may find Beauty and express it for the community in which they live and the race to which they belong. And this must above all be revealed to the artists, that their service is to mankind rather than to themselves; for them too, self-seeking is death, and the mercenary motive is their ruin.

When artists with these qualifications appear, they are liable to become social reformers, as Ruskin did. That intensely and exquisitely æsthetic nature, in its yearning to give and secure Beauty for the community, was brought up sharp by the discovery that our industrial and commercial organisation was incompatible with the production or appreciation of great art. He set out to save his country by forming the Company of St. George, and he began to publish *Fors Clavigera*, to explain what that company was, what it was to do, and how it would save the country. The world has not yet appreciated the nobility of that heroic figure, striving with his opulent mind and overopulent pen to redeem society; the artist to whom colour and form, refinement and delicacy, prose, painting and noble buildings were

[1] *The Life of Jean Henri Fabre, the Entomologist*, p. 93. (Translated by Bernard Miall. Hodder and Stoughton.)

the very breath of his life, turning aside to tilt at all the evils of his time, to found a new political economy, to bring his countrymen into the social and physical condition in which art could begin again to be. He was derided as a dreamer: his new light on economics was rejected by the journals and the economists alike: he was condemned for his inconsistency in denouncing usury and yet living on it: because the fine brain failed, and his extravagant language arose partly from that brain sensitiveness, his teaching (so he felt) was rejected by his contemporaries, and is eclipsed for his immediate successors.

But pathetic as the figure is, it is among the noblest and hopefulest that these later times have produced. We know now that his inconsistency was more in his humble confession than in reality, as we saw on a previous page. His political economy, incomplete as it was, has won the field. Economists themselves have learnt from him that the wealth of nations is in its healthy and happy lives, and not merely in material things. After all, he was not a dreamer, but a prophet; he foresaw; and if like the old prophets he was too pessimistic and sure of the coming ruin, he by his prophesying has helped to avert it.

And this above all he did: he proved the connection between art and life so convincingly that no freaks or reactions can ever obscure the truth: to secure a noble art, we must have a noble commonwealth; and to have a noble commonwealth, the corrupting and deadly motive of Mammon must be replaced by the desire to benefit, improve and bless our fellow-men; competition must make way for co-operation; the common good must always override personal gain. No one ever believed more in the necessity of art than Ruskin; but no one before him ever saw how art can only be achieved and kept when the Good and the True are otherwise secured. "Art for art's sake" was the cry which led to the decadence of art. Goodness for art's sake, Truth for art's sake, was Ruskin's discovery. A coterie of favoured individuals searching for Beauty for themselves, and then possibly searching not for Beauty but only for self-expression; this will mean the decadence of art. In that way it always fell, and always will. Morals and art are not the same,

but they are inseparable. Morals, if art goes, become hard and repulsive, and drive men into immorality. Art, if morality goes, loses not only motive and inspiration, but even Beauty.

Thus we come round to the need of Christlikeness not only for the salvation of artists but for the salvation of their art. A great love is the only sure spring of noble art. The artist must love the earth and the sea, the mountain forms, the drifting clouds, the play of water, the gleam of sunshine. He must love the living creatures, and especially men. He must see the beauty of Pan and love it. And to see the beauty of Pan is to see Christ. His desire to express Beauty must be love of Beauty, love of beautiful things, but above all love of humanity to whom he would show it. He must, in pity and love, take sides with God against all that befouls and debases human life. Great poets are great lovers. What a tenderness there is in Shakespeare, and even in Dante, though Dante was a great hater as well as a great lover. All true music comes out of a cosmic love. Painters and architects succeed in holding the world through their affections more than their intellect. *Pectus facit theologum.* Yes, but the heart also makes the great painter, sculptor or architect. Never was a great picture made, or a memorable building reared, except by love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself," is the mainspring of all that is lasting in art.

And this motive, eliciting the artistic gifts of the community, training the brain and the hand of the artist, directing the energies, suggesting the ideas and the enterprises, will at last bring art to its right place and give it its full function in the life of the world. For art acting under this motive will find the way of preserving the Beauty of Nature unspoiled, and of borrowing from that Beauty to ennoble the dwellings and cities of men. What a blackness of heart produced the hideous manufacturing towns of this country and of America; what a transformation will take place when a Christian art may plan the towns and order the streets and build the houses! A Christian art! In a dull conventional way the term suggests religious pictures

of the Virgin and the Child, of the crucifix, or of the saints. Such art may or may *not* be Christian. But a real Christian art will mean that no degraded slum will be tolerated, nor on the countryside any unwholesome cottages allowed. But it will go further than this and will penetrate more deeply. The Greeks at least perceived a fact which we have yet to realise in its fullness, that if goodness and beauty cannot be identified they yet may not be parted. The description of man as he ought to be was καλός καὶ ἀγαθός, i.e. beautiful and good. And the echo of that discovery sounds in the New Testament, where καλός, beautiful, stands sometimes for ἀγαθός, good. Goodness and beauty are twins. And therefore Christian art will consider how beauty may be carried wherever goodness goes; and as goodness must go everywhere, beauty must follow.

> Straight is the line of Duty;
> Curved is the line of Beauty;
> Follow the straight line, thou shalt see
> The curved line ever follow thee.

Yes, in tone, in language, in manner. In the family, in the elementary school, and more especially in public school and university, the true didactic will some day demand ubiquitous beauty. It will be intolerable to mutilate or mispronounce our language. English will be cherished as a pure fountain that may not be defiled; its rhythm, its harmonies, its rich vowel sounds, its sharp and distinct consonants will be exacted of all boys and girls as they enter upon life. The language is an instrument—we need not maintain that it is the most beautiful on earth; but it is ours, and we may no more misuse it than we would mar the violin on which we wish to play. Mumbled words, slurred syllables, wrong cadences, a dull rattle or a false staccato, may not be morally wrong, but they are an offence against Beauty. Or again, is not the human voice meant to be beautiful? Should it not be trained? It may be melodious, itself a kind of music. Granted that costermongers must shout in the exercise of their innocent calling; cannot they do it musically, as if they were singing "Buy my caller herrin'"? It is said that motor-cars must hoot

unmusically to clear passengers out of the way ; but that is surely an argument against motor-cars. The motor-bicycle must splutter and pant ; and as it is necessary for the young to tear along the roads at forty miles an hour, the misery must be endured. But in this world of harsh noises, at least let the voices always be musical. And if boys are taught that there is something shameful in lifting up the voice coarsely, harshly, gratingly, they may come to resent in others and to refuse in themselves the heathenish sound of the motor-bicycle ! It is not to be done by police regulations, but it can be done by public opinion and by education. Let art demand that in a civilised country the sounds shall be beautiful to the ear, melodious as the cow-bells on a Swiss mountain pasture. It can be done. And art will have made human life altogether better and holier.

And manners, even gestures, come within the province of art. The motto of my college was " Manners makyth man." We were told that manners was the translation of *mores*, and meant morals. But the motto has haunted me through life, a perpetual incentive to maintain a courtesy of manner ; not so much to know and cultivate the conventional manners of a period, which may easily be very bad, as to acquire the gesture, the expression, the mode of speech, which are intrinsically beautiful. What a happy mistranslation was that of the Authorised Version in 1 Pet. iii. 8, " be courteous." " Humble minded " is literal, but wholly unimpressive. Has not courtesy declined, since the change was made by the revisers in 1880 ? Courtesy can easily be taught. The human mind is ever ready to receive and to practise it. It is the function of art to teach, in home and school, on the exchange, in the street, in the train, on the ship. What a disaster that it is neglected and slighted, except for business purposes ! What a godless doctrine it is that politeness is inconsistent with truth, that gruff and rude manners are a guarantee of sincerity. It is a fact that in some parts of this country a man with pleasant and easy manners is suspected of felonious intentions, and can only establish his good faith by behaving as a boor.

It was David Livingstone's quaint way of putting it

that Christ would keep His promises because He was a great gentleman. "By the gentleness of Christ" Paul entreats the Corinthians (2 Cor. x. 1). Matthew Arnold suggested "sweet reasonableness" as the best translation of the Greek word; that is the essence of courtesy. The word "gentleman" has been debased out of all recognition and even applied to the very opposite. But "courtesy" is still a word of praise, and "sweet reasonableness" is a term that keeps perennially fresh. I am sure that if I could see Christ, as He was in the days of His flesh, it would be that sweet reasonableness which would surprise and win me. This transcends beauty of face or form: it is the beauty of the Lord. It should be the aim of all art, in teaching, writing or speaking, to produce it.

CHAPTER XI

ILLNESS

THERE is an occupation to be considered which comes to most people at times, and to a few always. It is illness. For some of us, to bear courageously pain, weakness and disablement is life's task. For others there are long periods of illness relieved by the joy of convalescence. But no consideration of the conduct of life can leave out of account this sombre aspect. Whether disease and decay are always to dog human life we cannot tell. There are many suggestions and hopes that some day man may master all the ills of the body and the mind, and *mens sana in corpore sano* may be the universal boon. But the immediate prospect is not bright. When influenza in a few months swept off more than the ghastly four years' war had killed, we had a sharp reminder of the limits of human skill in averting disease. And this was all the more impressive because the war itself had revealed an unparalleled triumph of the healing art. Never had a conception been formed of what doctors could do; no war was ever waged in which death from disease was so restricted. The ghastly horrors of the trenches at Sebastopol, even the ravages of enteric in the South African War, seemed incredible in face of the masterly and Christlike prevention of disease in Flanders and France. There was a legitimate sense of triumph. Here, at least, was something gained: while the world went mad, and by all conceivable methods of destruction was destroying ten millions of its manhood, there was medicine winning its bloodless victory, saving lives, healing and restoring the wounded; there was surgery almost remaking the shattered bodies. It was a spectacle never to be forgotten, a victory with which no regrets were mingled.

And yet, as soon as war was over, that mysterious disease, which bore still the hardly dreaded name of influenza, swept like a wave of death right round the world. Medicine was helpless; doctors could do nothing; nurses could only soothe the dying and swiftly die themselves. It was a strangely solemn warning, not without divine intention, that man may not presume. Strive as we may to avert and mitigate disease, there is no promise yet that it shall cease to be.

It has been the secret of Mrs. Eddy's power that she held out this promise to mankind. Her book *Science and Health* has for a million of nominal Christians superseded the Bible; and a Church bearing the eccentric name of Christian Science has sprung into amazing life, because it advances the dogma that as God is Good and as there is but one Spirit, omnipresent and omnipotent, there cannot be any illness or pain (or death?); if there *seems* to be anything of the sort it can only be the outcome of perverted thought. And to this new theology, based on a new metaphysic and preached with ardour by new evangelists and apostles, the recent investigations of M. Coué at Nancy have lent a psychological support. Suggestion and autosuggestion can cure certain diseases and can keep the body in health. Here there is no theological dogma, no metaphysical subtlety. But empirical experiments have revealed the fact that in the unconscious life strong forces may be set in motion to heal the several disorders of the body; and they can be set in motion not only by suggestions conveyed from without, but by suggestions made from within. Christian Science would make all illness sin; it would treat illness and sin in exactly the same way, as the product of an unenlightened mentality. M. Coué has nothing to say about sin, or about the causes of disease, but, with a pure and absolutely disinterested beneficence, he tries to teach us all the power which resides within our own being of bringing into play curative forces which lie beyond our conscious control.

Christian Science has been a fine business concern; it amasses wealth if it does not give health; its untrained and unqualified healers accept fees which doctors would

hardly feel justified in claiming. M. Coué, on the other hand, has given a striking example of disinterested philanthropy. He would impart his secret to all; he would make it so simple as to put it into the hands of the poorest and the least instructed. But both Christian Science and the new practice of Suggestion and Autosuggestion seem to offer a prospect of a world in which disease and suffering will be no more.

But we must not be too impetuous. We cannot, on the strength of this prospect, ignore the disease and suffering which still persists. Christian Science has not dealt successfully with some of our worst physical troubles—death still survives its demonstrations. And the war—notwithstanding the triumphs of surgery, medicine and psychoanalysis—has left millions, as numerous as the slain, maimed, injured, if not disabled. The problem of suffering must be acute, whatever progress may be made in healing, as long as there is this vast, silent army of men, not yet old, destined to drag out their lives in apparent uselessness, if not in continual pain and discomfort.

And there is old age; yes, that is a problem by itself.

There is still room, and a crying need—all the more crying because of the pitiless theory which seems to charge illness on the conscience as a sin, a theory as pitiless as that of Job's friends, who insisted on treating his calamities and sufferings as the judgment of God—to deal with this persistent aspect of human life, the bed of pain, the longdrawn-out suffering, invalidism, old age and death.

Whatever the future may have in store, hitherto illness has often been a school of the saints; and Christlikeness in this school has been an example to the world, shining with the same rays that stream from the Cross.

There are those who, in spite of lifelong illness and almost constant pain, have worked for others with self-repressing fortitude. There are those whose suffering itself is their only possible message to others, and yet that has become a message of tenderness and strength. Thankful indeed should I be if this book might reach some of these brave, patient souls, and might assure them not only of comradeship in suffering, but also of comradeship in the ranks of

God's most active and successful servants. "They also serve who only stand and wait" was Milton's message from his blindness.

No one seems more heroic than they—a very great company—who have carried on, without flinching or murmuring, hampered with continual ill-health. I think, for instance, of T. T. Lynch, who, when I came to London, had but recently ended his ministry in the small temporary building at Mornington Crescent. The echoes of his voice were all about me, and I frequently met those who had found in his words the breath of life. He was brought into prominence by some ridiculous persecution instituted by some swashbuckler of orthodoxy, who found in *The Rivulet*, an exquisite collection of poems, spiritual and original, that new note which is the breath of life to religion and the bugbear of the dull Pharisees who constitute themselves in each generation the Defenders of the Faith. But while bigots were assailing him, Lynch was carrying on his ministry for the small company of faithful and grateful friends who had gathered around him. In his *Theophilus Trinal* he gave them his spiritual autobiography; in his sermons he gave them himself, a pure, eager soul, a poet, a prophet, treating the things of God with the ardour of an ecstatic child and the wisdom of the faithful soldier of the Cross. And all the time he was suffering from *angina pectoris*. Often he had to stop in his work and throw himself on his study floor in the paroxysms of anguish. Too often he could not appear in the pulpit and his congregation was disappointed. During one prolonged period of his illness he managed to write out his sermons and send them to members of his Church, who might read them to the congregation on Sunday. "Sermons for my curates" they were called, and published under that name. What a warfare his life was—what a victory! Did it never occur to him that a merciful God, having this and this to say to His children, might have given to His messenger relief from the anguish, and prolonged life to utter his message? No, apparently this never occurred to him. He did his brief work in spite of the pain; and the pain became part of his work, the very feathers which carried his arrows.

It was the triumph over the difficulties which crowned his effectiveness, as the speech of a stammerer comes with all the force of the effort which masters the impediment.

And the same explanation occurs for the unprecedented charm and power of Robert Louis Stevenson. It need not be denied that he had a rare gift of style, wrought by incessant toil to a high perfection. His active and eerie imagination made him the writer of verses and novels which can stand very well on their own merits. His genius for friendship made his letters a literary achievement which may outlive his novels. But what gives the poignancy to his works, and binds the hearts of his readers to him with indissoluble ties, is that he was engaged all his brief life in a struggle for health, and that for his last years he was an exile from his beloved country in that distant island of the Pacific which he has irradiated with his genius, because there, for a few years at least, he was able to live and breathe and love and inspire. It is that battle with a congenital disease, and the spiritual triumph over it, that gives the vibrating quality to all he did; that passion for home: "Be it given to me to see thee once more in dying, home of my fathers," that long weariness of the strife, emitted at last in the line of the requiem:—

> Here he lies where he longed to be,
> Home is the hunter, home from the hill,
> And the sailor home from the sea;

It is this note of suffering, bravely borne and overcome, which wins us all. In this he has given to the world what the hale and the hearty can never give. He has taught us that disease and ill-health can not only be endured, but even turned to glorious gain. He has encouraged us all to bear, and has set around many a bed of pain the cressets of joy. Who did more for the world—Mrs. Eddy, who assured it that pain and ill-health are non-existent, or Robert Louis Stevenson, who showed that they can be made an occasion of victory and a means of heartening the readers of works which by their quality are immortal?

We are informed in a queer book about present-day preachers that one of them, a woman, who has broken

the invidious bar and come to the front as a minister, ordained by God to teach and to lead, has been a sufferer from a physical cause all her days. It was this constant pain which created her sympathy with sufferers and made her the champion of the disabled and disinherited. It is this thorn in the flesh which makes her speech so poignant and draws around her the tried and tempted humanity of to-day. This was the cross she took up to follow Christ; in bearing it she has attained her Christlikeness.

But there are those whose cross seems heavier still. They are completely incapacitated by infirmities and disease. Not like Grey, whose life of suffering blossomed in the immortal *Elegy*, or like Cowper, whose lucid intervals in a life of hypochondria furnished a great body of poems and letters, gay and rippling with laughter, and yet clear-cut and imperishable in a wisdom and an art which place him among the immortals; not like George Matheson, whose blindness yet allowed him to be an eloquent preacher and an inspiring writer; or like Fawcett, who triumphed over the same infirmity, and (by his wife's devotion) wrote valuable books on economics and rose in Parliament to be a Cabinet Minister. There are multitudes of people who must spend their days disabled by mental weakness or disease, blind, with no genius to find other outlets, deaf, cut off from the music of nature and of the human voice; crippled, arrested, damaged; there are multitudes who must face all their days the certainty of congenital or inherited disease, who carry within them from the first the seeds of death, and must feel themselves cut off from the kindly race and the full equality with their fellows. They do not take up a cross to follow; they are born to it, or from early days nailed to it. Among these have always been found some of Christ's truest followers. From lonely beds and pallets have come flashes of light, words of cheer, examples that have influenced and redeemed the lives of others. Sometimes that helpless, and perhaps deformed, invalid has been in the house the spring of unselfishness and love, the all-unconscious teacher of relatives and visitors, evoking all that is best and noblest in those who watch and minister. Sometimes the quiet trust in God and the firm

grasp of Christ, in those who might seem to have such a charge to bring against the Divine justice and mercy, form a more effectual evidence of God than all the happiness and success and powers which God has given to others. And this Christlikeness of the sick-room has often preached Christ, when the pulpit and the priest, the Bible and the Church, seem to have failed.

And in the light of this fact an interpretation is suggested of that remark of Christ, that the man was born blind, not as a penalty of sins committed by his parents or by himself in a previous existence, but in order to show forth the works of God. The passage is often quoted to justify the doctrine of reincarnation, as if Christ allowed the transmigration of souls because He denied the doctrine of Karma in this instance. The doctrine of reincarnation, the most dismal and forbidding that the human mind has forged, can find no root in the mind of Christ. But the passage certainly does offer a rebuke to that other deadly and heartless doctrine which prevails in our day, that sickness and disease are contrary to the will of God, the result only of our own misguided and perverse mentality. That man, Christ implies, was born blind and was allowed to live for years with that disability in order that, by Christ's act of healing, glory might come to God, in order, probably, that all the blind, and all sufferers, might be inclined to turn to Christ as the good Physician, assured that He will either heal their sickness or transmute it into blessing for themselves and for the world. The saints upon their beds, says the Psalmist, can glorify God; yes, on beds of sickness and on deathbeds their service of praise may continue.

But there is an experience of human life which tests all the faith of those who must pass through it, and of those who look on. It is the suspension, the decline, the decay of old age. When we say that Jesus bore all our infirmities, we must make this exception. He had not to face old age. In the glad midpoint of life, when all His faculties were in full development, He was called by the Cross into the life which was truly His. But we believe that though He never endured old age, He understands it, and is able to succour those who are called upon to endure it. It is life's last and

often its worst trial. One can think with composure of anything rather than of Cowper in those last distressed years, when he lived on under the agonizing conviction that he was lost, or of James Smetham, that brave, bright, humorous artist, ending his days in a similar dejection, or of George MacDonald, that noble teacher of the Father's love, ending his life with ten years of absentmindedness, in which he could not communicate with those who loved him so well. Now and then God grants even to extreme old age complete serenity of mind, a profound content, a bright, unfailing hope. Then the soul can say to itself Whittier's beautiful poem, "When on my day of life the night is falling." And those who can say and feel that, continue to help and encourage and bless to the end. One bright and beautiful old man I knew who lived in joy, and at last, when the fatal illness came and he was told that he could not get better, said cheerfully: "Then nothing remains now but to give God thanks." Well might we all pray for an old age which could give such cheer and leave such a radiance behind. Otherwise might we not, in all humility and submission, pray that we might go home before our faculties decay, before we sadden those who love us with the change, or lead them even, with our anguish of self-reproach, to wish that death might close the melancholy scene?

We should live our life throughout with a view to the end; we should take into account those possible years of senile decay. Not only should we try to reassure our friends that, though the outward man should perish in that pitiable way, the inward man is, and will be, renewed; but we should study so to live in mental and physical sanity that, if only God wills, that last disheartening stage may be evaded. There may be ways which may keep mind and body in essential health, the faculties undimmed, and at least love unabated up to the moment of transition. John Eliot, the apostle to the Indians, was able yet to say in extreme old age: "Memory has gone, sight has failed, thought halts, but Love remains."

There is a way of living which keeps body and mind in health and activity, so that old age loses its terrors and is

even mystically beautiful, like the *Fighting Téméraire* being towed to her final berth in the Medway. Turner, one thinks, had this in view when he produced his poem-picture, however little his own old age realised the suggestion. It is that way of living of which we are in search; we want the precepts, the commandments, the Law of the Spirit of Life, by which to guide the successive stages before we reach the last.

A life of regular toil, relieved by necessary recreation, a regard for health, though no anxiety about it, a concern for others, self-sacrifice to do them good, the faithful development of all the faculties, and their employment for the welfare of the world, the watchful guarding of the thoughts, that they may not wander into morbid ways, but may be always directed to God and brought into subjection to Christ, faith and hope and love; these are the conditions to be observed if we are to enter the period of old age gladly, and to pass through it to the ever-approaching exit triumphantly.

Jeremy Taylor wrote his famous book in the seventeenth century, *Holy Living and Holy Dying*; nor in that day could it be bettered. But it needs rewriting for the twentieth century, or perhaps not rewriting, but supplementing. Everyone would be the better for reading it now; its rich learning and musical cadences have made it a classic. But certainly the point of view has now changed, and life presents itself in a new light to the men of to-day. What was essential then is essential now; but all the appurtenances of life, the purview, the outlook, have changed. And we need a new *Holy Living and Holy Dying* written in view of our present-day problems and the immense possibilities. Presently, no doubt, the new Jeremy Taylor will appear. The following pages only offer a sketch and a few suggestions on the subject.

We do not think much of dying to-day, perhaps not enough. There is a reaction, encouraged by the decay of dogma. For the four years of the war we were fed on death. Men were blown to pieces, scattered to the winds, drowned in the ocean, poisoned, maimed, tortured until death was an object of desire. And since the war the scorn of death

and the cheap estimate of human life have constantly filled the papers with murder and suicide. But the old values will return; soon again it will seem a solemn thing to die, and "Prepare to meet thy God" will fall no longer on deaf ears. For we always discover afresh that the only way to live well is to live with the view of dying well. Life is uncertain, and the day of our departure is hidden from us; we are made aware of the suddenness of it, the possibility that it may come at any moment; and this is to keep us ever in such a way of living that the unexpected summons of death should not alarm, but rather gladden us.

A Christlike life ends in a Christlike death. For Christ assuredly taught us how to die. Life was for Him a sacred task, and when He could say "It is finished," He closed it by breathing the words: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." That is the way to die. Conscious of Jesus, murmuring His name, let me realise that the end of life has come, the end which is a beginning, and with serenity and gratitude give back to my Father in Heaven the Spirit that He breathed into me.

Happy are they who can do this consciously, and with tender farewells and smiles to those who watch around them. But it may be done in the mysterious realm of the unconscious, if the physical frame has decayed and the consciousness has faded away. And if the closing act of life here is to be this sigh of gratitude and trust: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," the preparation must go on in daily life, through all the stages from childhood to old age. We must not intermit it. In childhood we were taught to say "Jesus, tender shepherd, hear me, bless Thy little lamb to-night"—we must not forget in adolescence, but must commit the opening powers of mind and body to the same guardian care: in the stormy and questioning period of youth we must hold fast to this, the daily, humble surrender of life and powers to God; through the long middle period of toil and achievement, or of toil and failure, we must continue and confirm the habit: My times are in Thy hands, my God; I leave them there. And when every morning has been an act of faith, and every evening a deliberate commending of the Spirit into the hands of God,

that last act will come very naturally; we shall breathe those last words instinctively.

For it is to be considered that if Christ taught us how to live and how to die, He showed us also how to rise again. Death becomes the gate of life; we approach the dark portal, seeing the light beyond. The old poet's words are on our lips:—

When the dumb hour, clothed in black,
Brings the dreams about my bed,
Call me not so often back,
Silent voices of the dead,
Toward the lowland ways behind me,
And the sunlight that is gone!
Call me rather, silent voices,
Forward to the starry track,
Glimmering up the heights beyond me,
On, and always on![1]

[1] The lines were dictated by Tennyson shortly before his death. In the new *Golden Treasury* a note is appended: "If a friendship of near half a century may allow me to say it, those solemn words, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, give the key to Alfred Tennyson's inmost nature, his life and his poetry."

BOOK II

THE CHRISTIAN DECALOGUE

CHAPTER XII

THE CHRISTIAN DECALOGUE

If we seek to understand and to formulate the rules and requirements of Christian conduct, that must not be taken as any disparagement or suppression of the Ten Commandments. That Decalogue which, according to Jewish tradition, was engraved on the tables of stone by the finger of God, states with remarkable succinctness and clearness the fundamental requirements of a society which is to be healthy and progressive. By God writing these laws on tables of stone is meant that the Ten Commandments are of Divine origin and of universal and perpetual obligation. Necessary in a primitive society and in the foundation of States, they remain necessary forever, whatever additions have to be made as moral ideas develop and as society assumes a more complex organisation.

It is sometimes suggested that this ancient Decalogue is only Jewish, and passes away in the advent of the Christian religion. But not one jot or one tittle of this law can perish. If it is Jewish, it is the greatest service of Judaism to have made this a fundamental law for all time. The second commandment has been omitted, in order to defeat the iconoclasm of a more spiritual worship; and the modern Protestant world is rejecting the fourth commandment in its impatience of worship and feverish thirst for pleasure. But there is nothing to show that these fundamental laws of a moral and spiritual life are abrogated. Certainly Jesus gave no sanction for image worship; and if He denounced the superstitious Sabbatarianism of His time, He was so far from abrogating the Sabbath that He distinctly declared it was "made for man," made, i.e.

by God, for man; blessed, as it were, by blessed angels pitying human cares.

The second and fourth commandments are as valid as the rest; they are justified by the experience of life and by the history of the Church. And no one to-day could state the laws of human happiness and welfare in a more compact form than this. The social reformer and moralist to-day would probably leave out what concerns God, and the sanction of the Sabbath, if not the Sabbath itself. But therein the modern would betray its inferiority to this primitive moral code. The non-theistic attitude of modern morality is its weakness. When God is lost, morality rapidly goes. For man will readily advance that destructive question which defies an answer: if there is no God, if the moral law is not at the basis and wrought into the very essence of human life, why should I observe it, what claim has it upon me? The one sanction for morality is found in the nature and will of God. Apart from this, morality is merely prudential, that is, it is no longer morality at all.

Monotheism is the foundation, the reason, the sanction for the moral law: that is the first commandment. Idolatry cannot be kept from sensualism and moral corruption. The second commandment stands: God is Spirit, and cannot be presented to the senses, but only to the Spirit. To take God's name in vain is a fundamental irreverence which perverts and poisons the human mind; that is the third commandment. The seventh day of rest from toil is required by the physical and mental system, and to keep it unto the Lord our God is a requirement of a sound spiritual life. The fourth commandment, one day in seven for physical rest and spiritual worship, stands, affirmed by experience. The French Revolution, in its hatred of Christianity, substituted a tenth day for the seventh. But it would not do. In the Great War munition workers were kept at work on Sundays to save the State; but the regulation had to be altered, for the work turned out by seven-days' labour was less and worse. Permission was given by a high authority to work in the allotments on Sunday, and there was a temporary success in the regular supply of food during the war; but who would say that the country

has not suffered more by the rapid and progressive destruction of the day of rest since peace came? What this nerve-racked generation needs above everything else is calm, peace, steadiness. And the recovery of the day of rest, the silence of the roads and the streets, the peace of the country-side, would not only save our souls, but heal our bodies. There is no fear of losing the rest-day by the demand for a seven-days' working week; but we are losing the rest-day by the restless craving for pleasure.

The fifth commandment is violated and forgotten, to the unspeakable detriment of the home and of the children; the honour of father and mother has to be taught afresh if we are to recover from the irreverence and vulgarity of the times. The sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth commandments, though increasingly broken, are not theoretically disputed. Indeed, the condemnation of murder will presently be accentuated, as we realise how the vast taking of human life in the war has its aftermath in countless murders and suicides and outrages. The sin of adultery is brought home to the conscience of men again by the crowded divorce courts and their revolting details. This is an adulterous generation indeed. But the shamelessness begins to disgust men. Purity will be appreciated again when the filth of the stews begins to sicken a saner generation. Stealing and false witness against one's neighbour have no defenders, though many practise them.

The tenth commandment, against covetousness, is more needed than it ever was. For the most penetrating and destructive disease of the modern world is covetousness, the passion to get rich at the cost of our neighbours.

The ancient Decalogue, therefore, stands unrepealed and unrepealable. It is of obligation, not as the law of Moses, but as the law of God. The neglect and violation of it bring all our woes upon us and threaten the dissolution, of society. It is to be wished that it could be written again in golden letters over every altar in every church, and graven on all public buildings, incised into every heart.

But there is another Decalogue which should be beside it, for it grows out of it, the Decalogue of Christ, the Laws of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Christ's attitude to the Ten Commandments is shown in the Sermon on the Mount. Far from repealing them, He extended and deepened them; He brought within their scope the inner life in a way peculiar to Himself. For Him, Thou shalt not kill, or Thou shalt not commit adultery, referred to the beginnings of the passions which, unchecked, would end in those sins. His whole method was more searching, more radical. Indeed, His criticism of the Ten Commandments was that they did not go far enough. He was taking men much farther. A man might observe those Ten Commandments scrupulously and completely, and yet remain a cold-blooded, self-centred Pharisee. "All these have I kept from my youth," he might say, and yet he might be quite far from the Kingdom of God. Christ, therefore, preferred to epitomise the commandments in one great Law of Love. Unless you love God with all your heart (or mind) and strength, the keeping of the commandments will be a cold and lifeless formalism; unless you love men as much as you love yourself, though you keep all the commandments, you will come short of your duty to them. Will your father and mother be content, though you honour them, if you do not love them? Will God be content, though you make no image of Him to bow down to and though you never take His name in vain, if you do not love Him?

But love, and all will be well. Love your parents, and you will render them the honour they desire. Love God, and you will speak of Him and act to Him as you should. Love, and you will not kill. Love, and adultery will be inconceivable to you. Love, and you cannot steal. Love, and you cannot covet.

Here was a principle creeping in which, so far from superseding the Ten Commandments, gave them life, supplied a motive, made their fulfilment a delight. But the new principle went much farther than the old commandments contemplated. This new inclusive commandment unfolded, blossomed, bore new and undreamed-of fruit. How love should work in the world, how to give effect to this Divine force, which was indeed God Himself, this became the supreme problem; in the glow and glory of the new truth

those old commandments looked cold, negative, even grim, like the Alpine heights before they are touched by the rising sun; firm and strong and everlasting, like the Alpine heights, but not yet lighted with the glory and fervour of God.

Christianity did not, then, supersede the Ten Commandments, nor did it produce a Decalogue of its own; but it opened new fountains of moral life and cleansing; and in countless applications, as the drama of mankind proceeded, it brought to bear on life the supreme and inexhaustible source of God—love to God and love to man.

In each age and stage of human life there is a new Sinai. Again for us in each generation God writes on tables of stone, and the Spirit copies on the fleshy tables of the heart the new commandments.

With the view of finding what the new law was saying to this our generation, a study circle met, as intimated in the opening words of the present book, for a few weeks of conference and inquiry. It was a miscellaneous group of people, men and women, young and old; but there was complete agreement about the purpose which drew us together: we all wanted to know how the Christian religion should be applied to our times, what it required us to be, and what to do. Could we, for instance, draw up a Christian Decalogue for this day; a Decalogue which, without pretending to exhaust the demands of our religion, might yet direct our thoughts in practical channels and bring the faith into contact with life? When we began, we were not sanguine about achieving the object. But one member of the circle brought us a kind of Decalogue, which made a strong impression on us all. The more we examined these Ten Words, the more we felt that they were the matters of pressing importance for to-day; the more difficulty did we find in excluding from or in adding to the list. Going into detailed examination of the successive laws, we found them open out in a remarkable way; and we could not help feeling that we had obtained a new vision of what Christianity means and a new plan of putting it into execution.

The code, if we may call it so, was not in any order—it was not, as it were, codified. There was no logical con-

nection between its laws. But somehow they stood out rough and striking; they came to us like authoritative words of God.

Without further preface I will write down these ten rules as they emerged from an effort to shape and to correct them. When they are written down and before the reader they may provoke criticism and even arouse resentment; but it will be the object of the following pages to answer the one and to allay the other, and to lead up to the practical conclusion that here we have what Christ is commanding us to be and to do in this new generation which is arising out of the grim experiences of 1914–18.

I. We must strive, in accordance with the will of our Heavenly Father, to extend by every means possible the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

II. We must try to think of all races and nations as equally dear to God.

'III. We must forgive every injury which has been done to us.

IV. We must act on the teaching of the parable of the Good Samaritan, and must take seriously the precept of Jesus: "Go thou and do likewise."

V. As Christ for our sakes became poor, we should not estimate people by their possessions, but wholly by their character and conduct.

VI. We should strive constantly to be absolutely honest in our everyday dealings, realising that these are a very important test of our creed.

VII. As Christ blessed the children, we should recognise the sacredness of child life.

VIII. Because Christ healed disease, we should use His power to heal disease, and should exert all our influence to secure healthy conditions of life for all.

IX. Convinced that Christ came to establish Peace on Earth, we should turn all our thought and influence to render war unnecessary and impossible.

X. Because we have received special talents, we should try to cultivate and to use them in the service of Christ and His Church.

It will not, I think, be questioned that these are Christ's laws. We must try to show why these His laws are brought out into a special prominence to-day. They are at present largely lost in a wrong perspective. Much that is demanded of Christians, by Church usage or by Church authority, is only of secondary importance, accidental, hardly recognised as demands of Christ at all; while things that Christ categorically and emphatically demands are slurred over. The ineffectiveness of Christianity is largely due to this misplacement of emphasis. This may be illustrated by two instances. The stress on faith as the condition of our salvation, which to St. Paul seemed so vital, lest Christianity should be a mere repetition of Jewish legalism, is often overdone. Faith, as the Epistle of St. James is intended to remind us, is futile and indeed injurious if it does not produce "works." It was necessary to show that we are not saved by the merit of works (on which terms no man living could be justified), but it was equally necessary to show that the whole object of faith is to produce a regeneration, a character, a course of conduct, which we have ventured to describe as Christlikeness. It is beyond dispute that the present unbelief and neglect of religion is due to that false emphasis. The faith without works has resulted in a Christian society which is not Christian, in the incredible inconsistency of the members of the Christian Church, and the consequent reproach brought on the Church itself. Nothing needs to be insisted on more in the present condition of the world than that faith, in the Christian sense, is the power that produces works. "Faith working by love" is the proper formula. The true purpose of faith is to overcome the world, to remove mountains, to establish righteousness, to regenerate all mankind. The command: Believe, is vital and necessary and imperative. But it means: Believe in Christ, and to believe in Christ means to seek first the Kingdom of God, and not only to pray daily, but to work continually, that the Kingdom may come upon earth.

Another instance is found in the fatal overstressing of attendance at Church functions. Churchgoing and Church ordinances hardly come into the mind or teaching of Christ at all. But in most Christian countries they are reckoned

as almost identical with Christianity itself. Of course, theoretically everyone would admit that the rites and ceremonies of the Church are only means to an end; they are means of grace; their purpose is to fit the worshipper, the communicant, to live the Christian life effectively day by day, and to extend the faith of Christ through the world. But what happens in practice is that Christians are tested by their attendance at these functions and not by their life and conduct in the world. The supreme effort seems to be to get them to church; if only they will be regular worshippers, frequent communicants, regular in confession, and so on, nothing is said about the conduct, the character, the Christlikeness of daily life. The ordinances of the Church are made not so much the means of a Christian life as the substitute for it. An "early celebration" absolves the Christian from further religious duties for the day; he may take his own course unrebuked. If a man is in his place at church on Sunday, no one asks whether he is carrying on his business through the week in harmony with Christ's laws. "These things ought ye to have done, but not to leave the other undone," was Christ's formula. It is a question of proportion and relation; it is a false emphasis, a misplaced stress, which destroys the religious life.

The purpose of all Church institutions, worship, sacraments, preaching, is to keep men in vital communion with God, so that in all departments of life, and every day, they may be working God's will in the world. But there is a complete distortion and derangement if people are led to think that the will of God is exhausted in the attendance at Mass or in the discharge of a few specified "religious" duties.

The failure of Christianity to hold the world to-day is on all hands acknowledged, and by Christians deplored. The explanation is sought in many directions. But in a broad sense the secret is an open one. Evangelicalism has laid the whole stress on faith, but has failed to show how that faith must work by love and lead to the regeneration of society. Spurgeon preached in South London for more than thirty years that gospel of faith; and meanwhile that district of London fell into practical heathenism: "Christianity was not in possession," said a bishop. Many

hundreds of individuals were "saved," but they left that putrescent heathenism of the Christian city untouched. On the other hand, the prevalent ecclesiasticism laid the whole stress on the Church's services and sacraments; to observe these was what God required of men. "Are you a Christian?" ran the widely circulated tracts. "In other words, are you christened?" "Have you received the Holy Ghost? Or, in other words, have you been confirmed?" It was more important to come to confession than not to have sinned. Obedience to the Church was treated as identical with obedience to God, and, practically, as much more important than obedience to God.

What we want, therefore, to-day is to get the right emphasis, Christ's emphasis—to put first things first, to get all in the right order and relation.

The Decalogue is *there*, fundamental and essential. Christ assumes it and enforces it. But Christ Himself is *here*. He stands before us as our example; He goes before us and bids us follow Him. And we would know from Him in what order, in what mutual relation, His commandments for to-day come to us. We ask Him to guide us by the hand, for we are blind and ignorant; to explain to us the things concerning Himself, for we are dull and slow to understand; to open our eyes to the situation which is before us now and to enable us to apply His truth to it, for we are strangely misguided and liable to miss the point.

Moreover, we are appalled by the discovery which we are often making, that there are persons all around us who, apparently in complete unconsciousness, profess to be Christ's and yet are constantly violating some of His plainest laws. Our powers of self-deception seem to be unlimited. Here are whole classes of people living like Dives with Lazarus at their gate, who never see that the parable applies to them. Here are multitudes who read without turning a hair that covetousness is idolatry, and yet spend all their working lives in an unending struggle to acquire. Here are crowds who hear the command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; they are, as they suppose, Christians, but it hardly occurs to them to tell the gospel to the man next door, still less do they bestir

themselves to send it to the people who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

We need—and the need has become desperate—to see ourselves and our pretensions and professions as God sees them; to see all the world as He sees it, and our responsibility for all the world as He conceives it.

Here is Christ's law, written at no extravagant length, in the New Testament. His commandments are neither complicated nor grievous. Here is our modern society, in obvious and avowed need of His law, discovering that it has not the power to guide itself aright and that its conventional laws, its "futile Decalogue of Mode," lead nowhere but to misery and ruin. Christ's law, so unquestionably true; the world's state so desperately in need of it. Can we not bring the two together? Can we not get hold of the practical application of the eternal truth?

"Son, go work to-day in my vineyard"; or, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" He speaks to us. Surely He will guide us and use us. Here is this Mount Sinai, and not Moses, but a greater than Moses, is ready to bring down to us the law out of Heaven. Let us not grudge the attention to listen, the effort to understand it, the cost to put it into practice.

"He that keepeth my commandments, he it is that loveth me," He says. And He reverses the saying: "He that loveth me keepeth my commandments." Yes. Love Him, and you will try to obey; try to obey Him, and you will love.

CHAPTER XIII

EXTENDING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

No one doubts that the Kingdom of God—or the synonymous Kingdom of Heaven, Heaven being the reverential substitute for the sacred Name—was the main thought in the mind of Jesus Christ our Lord. No one can fail to observe that it dropped out of the teaching of the Church; nay, that even in the New Testament it began to make place for other terms, other ideas. In the Fourth Gospel, even, it is seldom mentioned, and in places where the Synoptists use it, not infrequently John replaces it with the characteristic phrase " eternal life." This raises some important questions which occupy our minds to-day. Granted that the Kingdom of Heaven and Eternal Life are interchangeable terms, is there any reason for substituting the latter for the former? Was the idea so all-important to Jesus deliberately surrendered, or did it unconsciously slip away? And was there in that idea something which we can ill-afford to lose, something which we must now, though so late, seek to recover? What is the idea conveyed by the term " Kingdom of God? " What, even, do we mean when all over Christendom, in verbal obedience to Christ, we constantly repeat the petition, " Thy Kingdom come! "

These questions crowd in upon us, and are, wonderful to say, beginning to find their answers with very remarkable results.

The idea of the Church displaced that of the Kingdom, and it was forgotten that the Church was in any case only a means to an end, the immediate instrument for the realisation of the Kingdom of God upon earth. The Church was

regarded as the Kingdom; it crept into the shell of the decaying Roman Empire; the Pope was the Sovereign, the Vicegerent of God upon earth. The Kingdom of God which filled the mind of Jesus was that powerful organisation which reached its climax of power between the pontificates of Innocent III and Boniface VIII; which fell into schism and exile in the fourteenth century, triumphed over the Councils of Constance and Basil, and at last fell shattered before the rising claim of Europe for freedom, for truth, and even for common morality. After three centuries of humiliation, the Sovereign reasserted his power and his infallibility in 1870; and the Kingdom of God is to be a restored Papacy, with the Protestantism of the West and the Orthodox Churches of the East subjected again to the one authority.

Now it may safely be said that this conception and development of the Church, so far from realising the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, is the most formidable hindrance to its realisation. If the reign of God is only the reign of a Papal autocrat, why should man desire it? What faith in the living God can survive if His will and character are to be identified with a living Pope?

But another misconception of the idea of the Kingdom came from the Apocalyptic element in the New Testament itself. An expectation was raised by the passage in Daniel, and was confirmed by the Apocalypse, that after a long struggle the kingdom of the earth would become the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ. At length, in some glorious Advent victory, Christ would return to the earth and set up His Kingdom. Postponing the Kingdom to that unknown day, which, at first seeming near, receded ever, as time advanced, into shadow, uncertainty and speculation, Christians thought little or nothing of a Kingdom of God which could be realised now.

The very term fell into disuse, except that it was mechanically repeated in the Lord's Prayer and recurred whenever the Synoptic Gospels were read.

But the world's need has driven us to examine afresh the ideas of Jesus: our pitiable failure to make a tolerable human life along the lines of the current orthodoxy has made us inquire again into the term which meant so much

to our Lord. Breaking through the perversions which identify the Kingdom with the Church or defer it to an unknown future, a second advent and a millennial reign, we step back as it were to the flower-covered hill-side of Galilee, and listen with purged ears to Jesus discoursing for the first time about the Kingdom. We read and re-read the parables of the Kingdom; we interpret them by the Sermon on the Mount.

Has the reader ever climbed through the dense pine wood in the early morning and at last about sunrise emerged on the mountain summit, with wide outlook over the snow-ranges and flowers at his feet? That is not unlike the sensation which comes to the searcher when he gets through the entanglements of interpretation and of tradition and begins to listen to Jesus Himself. It is a breath of the morning, it is the fragrance of spring, it is an ineffable hope and joy. For what He meant by the Kingdom of God is simply the complete and unquestioned reign of God in every heart, in each life, in every state, in the whole family of the nations, a human society in which the will of God is unquestioningly done. God is King, but He is Father. His reign is the expression of parental love. The whole object of human life is to realise in practice the blessedness and the beauty of this supreme sovereignty of God.

A birth of the Spirit was needed to enter into this transcendent idea. Except a man is born of water and the Spirit he cannot even see it. Christ was sent, He said, and was lifted up, that whoever believed in Him might be born of the Spirit, might see and enter into the Kingdom. But the Kingdom itself meant that life should be entirely and continually ruled by the Holy Will, inspired by the Holy Spirit, developed by the creative power of God. This Kingdom of God was wholly here upon earth in the Person of Jesus; for He was completely under the authority of the Father and did perfectly His will. But as He made known the mystery of the Kingdom others pressed into it, the violent took it by storm. Every now and again mankind is swept by a passion for such a surrender, for life wholly lived in God, for society based on that sole principle. So the

Kingdom of God comes silently, not with observation, as the leaven leavens the lump.

St. Paul did not often use the term—he was too much possessed with the idea of the Church, or with the Apocalyptic future—but he understood what the Master meant. But for his Jewish prepossessions and the haunting imagery of the ancient cult, he might have developed in detail what Jesus meant by the Kingdom of God. But his definition breathes the very spirit of Jesus. The Kingdom of God is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." St. Paul had given to "righteousness" a technical meaning; but it is hardly possible that he read his own meaning into the word in this definition. The word meant justice, the ideal relation of men in a human society; it was justice which Greek thinkers, Plato and Aristotle, used to describe the ideal of human life. Righteousness is not quite the equivalent of the Greek word δικαιοσύνη; it fixes attention too much on a subjective state, and diverts it from an objective relation of man to man. But the reign of God is a political and social order in which every individual receives his due and all are bound together in ties of mutual service and help. The Father orders His family so that none is forgotten, none is treated unfairly—the vast family of the nation, the vaster family of all the nations—the Kingdom of Heaven is the holy, equitable life of all in one beautiful and progressive order.

And peace, the inward tranquillity, when the fruit of the Spirit takes the place of the works of the flesh; the good will in relation to others, when love is a bond of perfectness; the harmony of nations when the welfare of each is seen to be part of the welfare of all: this is the reign of God on earth. The wolf can lie down with the lamb; "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain," saith the Lord; the nations shall learn war no more. If ye bite and devour one another, take care lest ye be consumed one of another. The reign of God means that individuals and nations are wholly at peace, friendly, helpful. *Non sibi, set toti*, has become the motto of each person, each community, each state.

And joy in the Holy Ghost. When men come into

God's happy-making sight, when they obey and recognise Him who gives them all things richly to enjoy, human life becomes very glad. Beautiful is childhood, but as beautiful is youth. Beautiful is the strength of maturity, but beautiful is the autumnal glory of the waning powers. Most beautiful of all is death,[1] which is the passage into the condition of life for which this life was made.

This is the Kingdom of God—the pearl of great price, for joy of finding which a man will go and sell all that he has, that he may buy it.

Yes, this is the Kingdom of God which Jesus came preaching; for which He bade us to pray daily. The search for this is what He set before us as the first and indispensable object of life, to which all personal and material purposes must be subordinated.

"Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." By this commandment life is made sublimely simple, all our activities are directed, the whole object of life is kept in view. The object of human life, of each human life and of all human life, is to get the reign of God established on earth, and the reign of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is the simplicity of it which captivates the heart. We know what we are here for; we can find what to be doing. But it is the variety and range of activities growing out of the commandment which make the life thus ordered rich and endlessly interesting.

Here we come upon the definition of a Christian, and perceive the distinction between believing and not believing in Christ. A Christian is one who has seen this to be the object of life, to realise the Kingdom of God in the structure and ordering of society, and who therefore devotes all his powers and opportunities to that service. The unbeliever is one whose only object in life is to seek his own wealth or honour or comfort, who does not therefore concern himself with God's reign on earth or how to promote it. God's

[1] So Henry Vaughan:—

> Dear beauteous Death, the jewel of the just,
> Shining nowhere but in the dark,
> What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
> Could man outlook that mark!

reign on earth! It is a sublime and inspiring idea. Man is capable of conceiving the idea; he can work to realise it; he can find his own self-realisation in the contribution he is able to make to its general realisation.

The Church has always tried to realise the reign of God in the individual life; her teaching, her discipline, her organisation have been devised to achieve that end. And individuals have been regenerated, and saints have appeared, and a certain current of true piety has penetrated the turbid waters of human life. Is that *all* that Christ meant by the Kingdom of God upon earth? Was His thought that there would be the wheat and the tares, and only at the end of the world would the separation be made? Or had Christ a larger thought? Was He the Saviour of the world in a broader sense? And are those limited interpretations only the first understanding, the very partial understanding, of words and thoughts too great to be immediately grasped? The conviction is growing upon all minds that He did not only mean the salvation of the elect—though that He certainly did mean—but also He foreshadowed the right ordering of society, the just government of mankind; the kingdom of the world was to become the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ.

We therefore in His name venture to ask, What are the causes which hinder this reign of God on earth? Granted that we must never cease to aim at establishing this reign in individual lives; granted, even, that only by a perfected reign in the individuals can His will ever be fully done in the whole world; yet, are there not certain hindrances to His reign in the constitution and management of society which Christians are bound to remove; and are there not certain principles of social organisation and political reconstruction which would promote the reign of God, nay, even be in a sense the means through which that reign would be established?

If it is so, it becomes a primary duty of every Christian, and in a sense the test of the reality of his Christian faith, to work by all means at his disposal to remove the obstacles to the Kingdom in the organisation of society, and to establish that regime in the State itself, and in the rela-

tion of States, which will best express the reign of God among men.

Under this conviction we begin to study the condition of things in our modern world, asking always, Is this in harmony with the will of God? Like peals of thunder rolling through the sky comes the answer: No; this and this and this is quite obviously in opposition to His will; this and this and this an enemy has done. We look at industry and trade, and we are at once sure that it is not His will that men and women should pass their days in drudgery, and even then be uncertain of earning their bread, when the wealth produced is piled up and accumulated in the hands of a few, to be squandered in boundless luxury and self-indulgence. We see that in giving to us an earth so bountiful, and faculties capable of producing and applying the earth's wealth, God wishes that all His children should be fed and clothed and housed, and all should have opportunities of a full development and of a rich enjoyment of His bountiful provision. Dives and Lazarus represent the violation of the Kingdom of God; and to remove that contrast is to promote the Kingdom.

A primary object of Christianity, therefore, is to equalise the conditions, that none should have superfluities until all have necessaries, that life should be made as good as possible for all, before anyone can claim a surplus.

The overcrowding in towns and the comfortable and luxurious dwellings of the fortunate are alike opposed to the will of a Father who loves His children equally. There is now a steadily growing pressure to make the minimum wage, and the poorest conditions of life in a Christian country, such as will secure for all not only sustenance, but leisure; not only food for the body, but food for the mind.

Those like Mr. Seebohm Rowntree or Mr. Tawney, who have studied and explained the condition of the people and the dire results of an acquisitive society, are working for the Kingdom of God. All Christians are similarly bound to work for it. There is a strange delusion in some Christian circles that politics stand in a necessary opposition to religion. But in a modern State politics must be a part of religion; for through the right government of the country in many

indubitable ways the Kingdom of God is to come. Good laws do much to make a good people ; and the just administration of the law is absolutely essential if the Kingdom of God is to come in any country. A sound *jus gentium*, a valid international law, a tribunal to which the nations can appeal in case of differences arising between them, are absolutely necessary as the expression of God's reign on earth.

But apart from direct political action there is need for constant labour to secure the right administration of law and to effect much which law cannot touch. Our fellow-men need our help ; we are our brothers' keepers. The vast service of philanthropy claims our personal interest. There are the hospitals to care for the sick ; clubs to train the young ; societies to promote particular reforms ; societies to promote fuller knowledge in all departments of life ; there are wholesome games and recreations ; there are churches and schools ; all the manifold agencies for the welfare and the betterment of men. By throwing our personal influences into these efforts we promote the Kingdom of God on earth.

There is a totally misleading distinction sometimes made between religious and secular. It entirely disappears when we endeavour to obey Christ's commandment : Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall follow. Life is unified ; one principle runs through all, whether it is called religious or secular. There is not one principle for Church life, for Sunday, for worship, for Church work, and another for the duties of the day, the business by which the bread is earned, the recreation and pleasures by which toil is relieved. There is one principle for both and for all—God's will. From one point of view all our activities are secular ; they are here in this world, in time, very transitory ; in themselves, perhaps, insignificant. But from the other point of view they are all religious. They all have reference to God ; they are all done in order to carry out His will. Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, it is all for His glory. The trivial round, the common task, the handiwork, the business enterprise, the professional duty, work in Parliament or on a borough council, work in the pulpit, in the parish, in the

school, in the theatre, it is all religious, if the one motive is to bring in the reign of God. The attempt to mark off a department of life and to call it religious is a palpable failure; the boundaries break down; you might as well put up a quickset hedge in the garden to keep the fresh air and the fragrance and the birds' songs within the enclosure. The birds and the perfumes and the winds defy your effort. You may have your glass-houses and your potting-sheds as part of your garden; and you may have your Church and your closet as part of your life. But the garden must share in all that is done in those retreats; life must have the fragrance and the song of your Church and your closet in all its parts.

The Kingdom of God! For that your house stands; for that your city stands; for that your shop, warehouse, or counting-house stands; for that your municipal buildings and your Houses of Parliament stand; for that your Palace of Peace at the Hague and the hall of the League of Nations at Geneva stand. The whole complex of human life, of political institutions, of education, of the new generation succeeding the old, of advancing civilisation, of growing knowledge and power, of rapid transport and intercourse between the ends of the earth, is justified by the one purpose—to get the will of God done, to make His reign a reality in every stage and detail and person.

The world has opened before our eyes in these later generations; on the other hand, it has contracted and become a unity. No longer does it seem impossible that it should as a whole be one Kingdom of God, who is One. Everyone is now called upon to make it his aim, as well as his prayer—Thy Kingdom come on earth!

Probably, then, the most truly Christian poem uttered in the nineteenth century is that of Blake's, which only in this twentieth century begins to come to its own. Indeed, in the nineteenth century this poem was not recognised as Christian, hardly even as religious, barely brought within the conception of religion by the symbolic reference to Jerusalem. But here, as our eyes open and we begin, for the first time after all these centuries, in a world unified by science, to grasp the meaning of what Christ proclaimed

as the Kingdom of God, this strange poem seems to us not only rich in inspiration, as if its wings were filled with the breath of God, but specifically Christian ; nay, in a sense, the one essential and first task of Christianity :—

And did those feet in ancient time
  Walk upon England's mountains green ?
And was the holy Lamb of God
  On England's pleasant pastures seen ?

And did the Countenance Divine
  Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
  Among these dark Satanic mills ?

Bring me my bow of burning gold,
  Bring me my arrows of desire,
Bring me my spear ! O clouds, unfold !
  Bring me my chariot of fire !

I will not cease from mental fight,
  Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
  In England's green and pleasant land.

CHAPTER XIV

ALL NATIONS DEAR TO GOD

I RECEIVED a shock on my first visit to America in 1893 from which I have never recovered. I was lecturing at Yale, and I asked if I might meet the coloured students of the University; they came, and I had a long talk with them. They told me what they had to face "at" the South, and one of them gave an instance which produced this ineffaceable impression. An open-air preacher concluded his address by inviting all to come to Christ, and suggested that they might show their intention by coming forward and shaking hands with him. A negro in the crowd responded to the invitation and stepped forward; but the preacher, a Christian preacher, a preacher of Christ, who had been speaking Christ's message to men, met him by saying that dark men were not included. This power of prejudice and the lengths to which it can carry men professing to be Christian not only horrified me at the time, but led me to the conviction that Christ's whole purpose was being frustrated by our racial antagonisms and colour prejudices.

One cannot discover in antiquity the colour prejudice. The Greeks regarded as barbarians all who were not Greek, but they made no distinction. They treated slaves as something less than human—speaking tools, as tools were speechless slaves; but the slave might be a Greek as well as a Scythian or an Ethiopian; it was not the race or the colour which excited the antagonism, only the status. Possibly Christianity had its origin designedly in an olive-coloured people, intermediate between the black and the white races. Certainly Christianity was meant to unite the two. Philip had no prejudice against baptising the

Ethiopian eunuch, who would be as black as Africans can be. And the prejudice had not appeared in the ninth century after Christ; for that stateliest of Italian churches, the Church of St. Zeno at Verona, contains the statue of the saint, the bishop after whom the church was called, and behold, he is a negro in full canonicals!

But, indeed, the question is virtually determined by our Lord's own conduct. The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. The Samaritans, as the nearest, were the most detested and despised and alien of foreigners to the Jews. Jesus therefore mingled freely with them and was welcomed by them; to them He communicated His highest and deepest truth. He was astonished at the gratitude of the Samaritan leper who was healed, and contrasted it with the callousness of the nine Jews; and when He would illustrate the right human relations, He told the story of a Samaritan, and said to the high-placed Jew, "Go thou and do likewise."

Beyond all dispute, then, contempt for foreigners and coloured men is absolutely unchristian. A Christian has not a shred of excuse for despising and rejecting a man of another race, for his claim to Christ and His salvation rests on no race privilege, but on a common humanity; it is only as a man, not as a white man or an Englishman, that he can be saved; and precisely on the same ground a black or a brown, a yellow or a red man can be saved. Nay, if it comes to be a question of colour at all, it is the white man whose position is dubious. The Jewish Christians were for keeping Europeans outside. Europeans were brought into the Church, in spite of their pale faces, simply because Christ's message was to all men.

The colour problem has become acute for the modern world, and it finds us unprepared; for strangely enough, this implicit commandment of Christ has never been clearly enunciated or enforced. Indisputable as it is, for want of thought many would not recognise it as Christian at all. Millions of Christians would be ashamed to confess that they violate Christ's laws, and yet would without shame proclaim their antipathy to a black or a yellow man. The prejudice seems to them justifiable, or at least venial, because

they have never faced the fact that it is radically incompatible with a faith in Christ, the Saviour of the world, in God, the Saviour of all men, or the fact that God made of one blood all the races of men. On the other hand, directly we attempt to act on Christ's command and to act in His spirit, we find our racial antipathies and our colour prejudices melting away.

Albert Schweitzer went out to relieve the physical sufferings of the African in a spirit of Christian philanthropy. He was smitten with a sense of the unpardonable indifference of civilised men to the needs of the uncivilised. We have all the remedies and ameliorations of sickness, the Africans have none ; they suffer pains which we with our knowledge could alleviate, they die of diseases which we could easily cure. He would go out and devote his life to healing the sufferings and sorrows of the neglected race. He gave up his secure position of a professorship at Strassburg ; by his organ recitals of Bach and the classic Life of the great composer which he had written, he earned the money to secure his own medical training, and then to maintain himself on the edge of the primeval forest. Living there for nearly four years among the suffering people, until the health of his wife required him to take a change, he learned to love the African whom he had gone to save. Hear him speak : " The operation is finished, and in the hardly lighted dormitory I watch for the sick man's awakening. Scarcely has he recovered consciousness when he stares about him and ejaculates again and again : ' I've no more pain ; I've no more pain.' His hands feel for mine and will not let it go. Then I begin to tell him and the others who are in the room that it is the Lord Jesus who has told the doctor and his wife to come to the Ogowe, and that white people in Europe give them the money to live here and cure the sick negroes. Then I have to answer questions as to who these white people are, where they live, and how they know that the natives suffer so much from sickness. The African sun is shining through the coffee-bushes into the dark shed, but we, black and white, sit side by side, and feel that we know by experience the meaning of the words : ' And all ye are brethren ' (Matt. xxiii. 8). Would

that my generous friends in Europe could come out here and live through one such hour." [1]

When we go to the men of other races and colours to exploit them, to drag them into slavery, to rob them of their lands or of their independence, we hate them because we have injured them. That is one of the strangest facts in human nature ; a trait, we trust, not of our own humanity, but of the diabolical forces which assail and invade and sometimes master us, that we hate those whom we have injured more than those who have injured us. The scorn and loathing which white men profess to feel for the negro, the red man, the yellow races, the Hindus, are only caused by the injuries the white men have done to these races.

But when we go to these very races with the love of Christ in our hearts, to help them out of their disabilities, to heal their bodies, to bring to their souls the message of hope and joy, we love them. The repugnance we feel to them is only the result of our selfishness ; directly we begin to pity, to succour, to save them, we love them.

It is admitted that the coloured problem is one of the most staggering which the United States have to face. The twelve millions of negroes descended from the slaves whom the earlier settlers imported, to work the sugar and the cotton fields of the South, rise up there in the midst of that country like an avenging conscience. It was a great triumph of Christ when their emancipation from slavery was declared by Abraham Lincoln. But another triumph has to come ; the white man has to receive the coloured man as a brother. The gravest social and political dangers dog the State until that consummation is reached. This elemental commandment of Christ has to be accepted and obeyed. "In Christ there is neither Greek nor Scythian, neither bond nor free" ; there are only men, all made of one blood, all needing one Redeemer, all redeemed by the same sacrifice, all, therefore, members of the same family—one man in Christ Jesus.

Incredible as it seems now, there were great and honoured Christian teachers in America who up to 1862 defended slavery on scriptural grounds.

[1] A. Schweitzer, *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, p. 93.

Still more incredible does it seem that there are still Christians who justify the race divisions and colour prejudices, as if they had their root in nature, ignoring the fact that Christianity is the transformation of nature, and that in no respect is its effect more transforming than when it compels us to recognise in men, as men, our brothers, without distinction of colour or tongue or race.

But the colour problem is for us hardly less acute in South Africa and in Central Africa. The Boers regarded the Hottentots and the Kaffirs as a lower race. Strong in their antiquated use of the Old Testament, they made no attempt to share with them the gospel, but tried to make them as the children of Gibeon. But the early contact of our own country with these African natives was through missionaries; Vanderkemp, Philips, and then Moffat and Livingstone, went to Africa, as Albert Schweitzer has gone in these latter days, to help and to save them. The missionaries learnt to love them. Those Africans who bore Livingstone's body to the coast, ultimately to find its rest in Westminster, showed how love conquers and unites. There is now a large Christian Church among Kaffirs, Bechuana, Zulus and Matabele. The triumph of Christ has been nowhere more marked in the course of the nineteenth century. But here the problem becomes acute again; the dark races, in a vast numerical preponderance, gaining more and more of our European culture, in science and in life, entering of necessity into the franchises of the British Empire, appear as a menace. The white population is more concerned with gold mines, diamond mines, fruit farms, and every form of amusement, than with religion. Most of the coloured race have little chance of hearing or understanding Christ's command concerning the Samaritan or the Ethiopian. And the Christian opinion in England is too lax, too uninstructed, to bring much help. But it is Christ and Christ alone who can solve this problem, and bring to South Africa and to Rhodesia a happy and prosperous future. The spirit of Moffat and Livingstone, of Krapf, of Coillard, of Stewart of Lovedale must prevail. A new breath must pass over these African populations. The greed and the gold-mining can lead only to confusion. But

let Christ speak, and the whole attitude of Britain to Boer, and of both to the dark races, will alter. Are the whites privileged? The greater is their obligation to help the unprivileged. Have the whites invaded the land, the country of the native African? Then in Christ's name are they bound to repay the dispossessed with all the advantages, intellectual and spiritual, which they possess.

If the Boers had understood Christ's commandment about colour, the story of South Africa would have been very different. But if Boer and Britain can understand it even now, obey it, and act upon it, the future may reveal a great civilised State in South and Central Africa, in which the virtues of the native race and of the alien race will supplement one another. At least the situation is free from the worst complication created by slavery and emancipation. The pioneer of Africa from our country was one who made it his supreme end to suppress slavery, which was the open sore of the world.

In India the coloured problem confronts us with inexorable severity. The difficulties in the administration of India are due entirely, or almost entirely, to race prejudice, and to the inability of Englishmen to realise that men of a different skin can be their equals and their brothers. The Mohammedans had no such difficulty, and the great Mogul Empire was established, which has left its splendid marks at Agra, at Delhi, at Lucknow. Akbar and Asoka were not embarrassed by the doubt whether men of another colour were inferior to themselves. Islam gained converts, whose descendants to-day number forty millions. We have been in India now for nearly two hundred years; we certainly have a wider Raj than Aurungzeb or Shah Jehan. For more than a hundred years devoted missionaries have been trying to commend Christ to the many races and languages of that great peninsula. From the outcasts of Hinduism a Church has been built up, and there are now about three millions of Christians, as against forty millions of Moslems. What is the reason of this slow and dubious progress? Briefly it is this: that the first Englishmen who went to India had never been taught that Christ equalises, unites, and then raises all men of whatever race, colour or tongue.

Neither yet have the Englishmen of to-day learnt this lesson. The failure is curiously pathetic. So much have the English done; what a calamity that they left this undone. The English have in a sense made India. Its diverse races and governments have been welded together under the British Raj, so that to-day there is an Indian nationality, an Indian self-consciousness, an Indian patriotism. All this have the English done. The English have governed India, not economically perhaps, but with singular integrity and even disinterestedness. They have established law and order where they were not known. They have made railways, reduced the ravages of famine, established a great system of medical aid. They have built colleges and schools and invited the Indian people to share in all the science and the culture of the West. They have administered the law with such justice that Indians would generally rather bring their suits before a British than an Indian official. All this they have done.

The English have carried on missions in all parts of India; they have sent great men, Carey, Duff, and a steady succession of not unworthy followers, to teach India the truth of Christ. They have founded institutions, schools, colleges and hospitals, and have toiled in the most trying climatic conditions, laying down their lives for the people, and often winning a real affection and devotion from them. All this they have done, and are still doing, not without some success.

But the hindrance all along has been that subtle prejudice, that ignorance of the spirit and purpose of Christ, that underlying presupposition that, because these Indian peoples were of a different colour, they were intrinsically inferior to white men. The caste system was the bane of Indian life, and we went and established another caste, the white caste, among them; perhaps one ought to say a series of white castes, almost as mutually exclusive as the Hindu castes themselves. We tried in the name of Christ to abolish their castes, and we were ourselves a caste. The Hindu salaamed and was silent, but he drew his own conclusions. He learnt something of Christ from the teaching that was given him; but the most important truth of Christ, the

equality and brotherhood of men in the sight of the Heavenly Father, he could never learn from the British Christians in India; apparently the British Christians in India had not learnt it themselves.

It is this truth of Christ that might save the situation in India, and in the Empire generally. If it had been understood in the time of Clive and Warren Hastings, the development of Indian life would have been different. Even now, if it can be understood—and there are signs that it is coming to be understood—the future is full of hope. Many of the English in India to-day regard Sir Rabindranath Tagore as typical. They have opened their eyes to see that Indians, so far from being inferior to us, are in many ways our superiors, and we must learn from them. Here is an ancient culture which had a long past when our forefathers were still savages. Here is a literature in a dead language which is akin to, and often superior to, that classical literature of Greece and Rome on which we have endeavoured to build our own culture. Here is a people with thinkers, poets, devotees, mystics, who are intrinsically religious, a claim which we can hardly make for ourselves. It begins to dawn upon our Western intelligence that we need India more than India needs us, inasmuch as these spiritual faculties are more valuable to men than those mechanical contrivances and that mastery of physical forces which form the chief contribution that we can offer to the East.

And what we are beginning to learn in India we may yet learn in China and Japan. A generation ago we were frightened by the Yellow Peril. The prophecy was uttered by Charles Pearson and others that dominion would pass over to the yellow races. China, armed and organised by Japan, would some day turn her victorious arms to the West, and our civilisation would go down under the invasion of heroes from the East more powerful than those which followed Tamerlane or Zenghis Khan. We were even appealed to for missionary effort, that our invaders and conquerors might be Christians before the cataclysm came. But they must be Christian in a better sense than Europe was in 1914, or the Yellow Peril may be worse than those earlier inroads of barbarian hordes. And it is no legitimate

motive for taking the gospel to the yellow races, that we may forestall or ameliorate the triumph which awaits them in the developments of history. There is only one motive which will be strong enough to organise and co-ordinate the several races of mankind in mutual service and steady progress; it is the motive supplied by this commandment of Christ. It is the Son of Man who can persuade us to regard all men as brothers and to ignore the distinctions which are made by race or colour, climate or language.

And let us not imagine that this broader sympathy with humanity is incompatible with that love of our own country which is generally called patriotism, though patriotism is a very ambiguous word, and is, as often has been seen, the last refuge of a scoundrel. Probably no one now would much care to be called, or to call himself, a patriot, unless he might definitely dissociate himself from those who bear the name. But the love of our own country, like the love for our family and kin, is wholly good and necessary; and he who has it not can never be the ideal man. Jesus Himself had a singular love of His country and a reverence for its institutions. "Salvation is of the Jews," He said. And He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, as He distinctly declared. Moreover, He enjoined obedience to those who sat in Moses' seat, and declared that He would not destroy a single letter or mark of the written law. This was patriotism of the heroic sort. It seemed to sound the same note as "My country, right or wrong," or "Deutschland über Alles." But this love of His own land and people was in Him not the incentive to antagonism and hatred of other lands and peoples; it was rather the mode of training and discipline by which He passed on to the love of all. At once He recognised in a Roman centurion a faith greater than He had found in Israel. If for a moment He seemed to refuse help to a Syrophœnician, because she was not a Jewess, that was only the prelude to praising her faith and granting her request. In the desire of Greeks, i.e. Gentiles, to see Him, He recognised His coming glory. He was for all nations, for all men; even His love of Israel was a love of all that was not Israel, for He conceived the chosen people as the appointed means

through which God's message of love could come to all the world.

The patriotism, therefore, that He practised and would enjoin differs from the non-Christian patriotism which has always been deluging the world with blood. The common and secular patriot shouts, " My country, right or wrong," believes that his country is intrinsically better than all the others, and that it is entitled to extend its rule over all nations for *their* benefit. He is intensely warlike, and always counts his country's glories in terms of defeats and slaughters and conquests. The patriot of this sort has been and still is the bane of the world. But Christ loves His own country on the way to loving the world. And therefore the patriot who obeys His commandment is led from the love of his own country to respect in other countries the love which their people feel for them. It is no part of his love of England that France or Germany or any other country should be depressed. He has no wish that his country should flourish at the expense of the others. For his love of his land demands that other lands should have reason to love her too, should look to her with gratitude and affection, not with hostility. He desires, therefore, that his country should benefit all countries, should make her appropriate and beneficent contribution to the life of the whole world. He is a patriot on the way to be the lover of all men.

This, then, is the commandment of Jesus which in these days needs to be brought out in its convincing authority. " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself " has on Christ's lips received an unexpected extension. When He said the neighbour was the hated Samaritan, He pointed to a time when the world would contract, and rapid communications would bring the ends of the world together. Our neighbour is now every man.

If we would obey Christ, Who died for all men, we must learn to look at man as man, not allowing differences of colour or language, or even of religion, to impair the common sense of humanity. We have our own family—that is necessary ; but not to the disparagement of other families ; only, in order that we may have that training and discipline which the family ties afford, as the preparation for serving

the rest of society. We have our own country; we love the soil, and the waters at their priest-like task of pure ablution round our coasts; we are proud of her history, her traditions, her literature, her poems; to us naturally no other land is so dear. But we cling to it, embrace it, absorb it, in order that, as fully-developed Englishmen, we may be more useful to the world; we cherish our English life that other nations may cherish theirs, and we may mutually benefit by the exchange of our spiritual wealth. We recognise that Christ has no chosen race or country; His Israel is mankind; His fatherland is limited by no frontiers, but includes the whole human race, which is itself but a province of the vast unseen Empire of God. We are bound for His sake to love and to care for not only the other nationalities in Europe, and our kindred in America, but our fellow-subjects in India and Burma; the yellow people of the East, the dark tribes of Africa.

By this, more than anything, can we test whether we have the mind of Christ. Have we set aside those prejudices which are the heritage of our fallen state, the legacy of Babel, the sorrowful echoes of "old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago"? Have we understood the old verse, and interpreted it in the light of Christ?—

Homo sum; nihil humani a me alienum puto?

CHAPTER XV

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES

It is very remarkable to notice the importance which Christ attached to the forgiveness of personal injury and insult. He was quite explicit in declaring that unless we forgive our persecutors and ill-users, God will not forgive us. He embodied this principle in the prayer which He bade us use ; so that whenever we ask for Divine forgiveness we, by the words we employ, commit ourselves to the forgiveness, the repeated forgiveness, the seventy times seven repeated forgiveness, of those who trespass against us. We do not always realise how new this conception was, and is. The law recognised the principle " an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, a principle which transformed the old exactness of retributive justice. Lady Glenconner records the remark of her little child on this subject, which must never be forgotten. She was telling him of the punishment dealt out before Christ came, and of the adage just mentioned, and he broke in and said : " Oh yes, I know the old religion said a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye, but the new religion said ' a kiss for a tooth and a hug for an eye.' " The child understood ; but in the corrupted currents of the world the clear, sweet law of Christ is often lost or blurred. It was that saying of His on the Cross, so amazing in its pity and love : " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," that led to the complete conversion of the Japanese criminal, Tokichi Ishii. His autobiography, written in prison, has been given to the world by Caroline Macdonald, the lady who visited him and left him the Gospel which produced the result. This man had spent his whole life in crime, and yet he had the chivalry to give

himself up to justice when another man was being sentenced for the murder which he had committed. He lay in the prison at Tokyo condemned. His first and only contact with Christianity was the visit of the two ladies who left that little Gospel behind them. In sheer ennui he read it: coming to the account of the crucifixion, he was arrested; but those words of Jesus, "Father, forgive them," stirred him to the depth of his soul. He seemed to recognise at once who it was who said this. He found Christ there in the prison, and he wrote this very wonderful narrative of what Christ meant to him before he died.[1]

As it is the amazing characteristic of Christ to forgive absolutely those who were putting Him to death, so it is His firm and quiet demand on all who would be His disciples that they should do the same. We must forgive whoever will be forgiven. Forgiveness requires a reciprocity. It is not possible to forgive those who will not have forgiveness, those who do not repent, those who do not ask for pardon. The motive of forgiveness is the good of the forgiven, and it does them no good if it does not lead them to repentance and change. But hard-heartedness, vindictiveness, implacability, are entirely forbidden to the followers of Christ, who, while fully conscious of the evil done and suffering from it, must with absolute sweetness and serenity forgive.

This plain requirement of Christ's law is often blurred by passion. When the injury is done to us, it seems so outrageous, so far exceeding what has ever been done by anyone else to anyone else, that justice itself seems to demand resentment and retaliation. And in the heat of temper we sweep down all the oppositions of mercy and of religion and indulge in our revenge. Thus crime breeds crime for ever. But the exact force and bearing of the law of forgiveness are for us in these days partly lost, because it has been stretched to cover much of which Christ was not thinking, and has therefore led to conclusions which are repugnant to common sense. Tolstoy, whose genius for lucidity and simplicity invested with a glamour and plausibility all that he wished to enforce, would use Christ's commandment, "Resist

[1] Vide *International Missionary Review* for April 1922.

not evil," to annihilate all the restraints and inhibitions of law and civil government. Not only must we forgive our personal enemies, but society and the State must forgive those who offend. Law, justice, punishment are all pronounced wrong, on the ground of Christ's command to us to forgive our enemies. This mode of handling Christ's laws discredits them, and involves them in the charge of being quixotic and unpracticable. A society is bound to repress those who would break it up. Anti-social crimes and vices must be punished by a State, if it is to continue to exist. But that is not a question with which Christ cared to deal. We cannot in His name throw open the prisons or say, in effect, to criminals: "Proceed with your life of crime; we shall not arrest or punish you, because Christ said, 'Resist not evil.'" No, we are bound to study Christ's words candidly, and never use them to establish our own foregone conclusions. And what He is constantly dwelling on is not the work of the magistrate who bears the sword not in vain in the interests of the State, but only the attitude of the individual to those who do him a personal wrong. The words of a great and divine authority, such as Christ is, must always be kept to the reference which He intends; the whole stress must be laid on His intention. He is not referring to what we must do to defend others from a wanton assault, or to defend our family, our city, our country, against a malicious attack. He is only telling us what we are bound to do when anyone attacks, assails, hurts or injures us personally. We are not to harbour resentment; we are not to retaliate. We are to repress our natural wrath and indignation. And we are to be ready on the slightest sign of regret, at the first request for forgiveness, freely and unconditionally to forgive. The habit of personal forgiveness may, and must, affect our attitude to public wrongs and international disputes. But it is not of these that Christ is speaking when He requires us to forgive those who trespass against us. And we must seriously and constantly consider what this implies for us, and we must watch with ceaseless vigilance against the swelling tide of indignation, against the tendency to be sudden and quick in quarrel, against the mistaken view

that we are doing justly when we seek revenge, or are showing a manly character when we resent wrongs.

The fact is that a hard, unforgiving temper maintained towards anyone who has injured us acts like a subtle poison on the mind. All the inward life is deranged, all the perceptions are distorted. With that poison in the system everything will go wrong. Presently even the moral principles will give way and the spiritual life will fade out. It is, therefore, not only for the sake of those whom we should forgive that our Lord is so insistent on this precept, "Agree with thine adversary; be reconciled to thy brother; forgive unto seventy times seven"; it is also for our own sake. He knows how that corroding poison will slowly but surely ruin us. It will be like the little pitted speck in garnered fruit, which, rotting inward, slowly ruins all, to adopt the poet's language about unfaith.

There is a story told in Ruinart's *Acta Sincera Martyrum*,[1] from the Church of the third century, which seems like a comment on Christ's command to forgive. In Antioch there were two bosom friends, Sapricius, the presbyter, and Nicephorus. They lived in each other's life, and seemed to the citizens of Antioch like twin brothers. Then they quarrelled, and the blame lay chiefly with Nicephorus. The quarrel was so bitter that the two friends became foes; they would not speak; they would pass one another in the street. Nicephorus in time came to himself, and saw that he had been wrong. Through friends, he sought the forgiveness of Sapricius, but in vain. Then he went to the house of his former friend, cast himself at his feet and sought pardon in the name of Him who had pardoned them both. But the presbyter was hard and unbending; Nicephorus had been wrong, and it was right that he should confess; but he for his own part could not forgive. Why should he, when he had always been in the right? He nursed his wrath and refused the proffered reconciliation.

But about this time persecution broke out. The Emperors Valerianus and Gallienus required all citizens to acknowledge the divine authority of the Emperors and to burn incense to the gods. Sapricius, the presbyter, was brought before the tribunal and commanded to surrender

[1] P. 238.

his Christian faith. But, unbending in his anger, he was equally unflinching in his testimony to Christ; he declared his contempt for the gods, and hurled defiance at the authorities. Prison and torture were powerless to shake him, and the magistrate condemned him to death, or, as Sapricius would have said, offered him the coveted crown of martyrdom.

But as Sapricius was being led to the place of execution, Nicephorus waylaid him, threw himself at his feet, and entreated forgiveness from one who was so near the gate of Heaven. In vain: the face of the martyr was like adamant; the lictors jeered at the madness of one who would ask pardon from a fanatic. The place of execution was reached; and then Sapricius faltered; the grace of God had withdrawn from his proud heart. Suddenly he turned to the soldiers, and asked them why he was to die. "For refusing to sacrifice," was the reply. "But I will sacrifice according to the edict of the Emperors," said the apostate presbyter, and immediately he was released.

And then Nicephorus, who had sought his forgiveness in vain, took his place, and confessed Christ. Faithful unto death, he received the crown of martyrdom which his former friend had sacrificed.

When we refuse to forgive we may not notice it, but we are renouncing God's forgiveness of us. When we cherish that fire of resentment in our hearts, it gives at first a congenial heat, but we do not notice what it is burning up; it is not the enemy whom we hate, but our own spiritual nature. It is far better to forgive our enemy and let him go free than to wreak on him a vengeance which only sears and scorches and finally destroys our own better nature.

Forgive him. He is in fault, he confesses it. He longs to be reconciled. Reach out your hand and forgive. Do not wait for him to ask; forgive him, that he may ask. Be forward in forgiveness. True, the forgiveness cannot take effect or produce the desired result unless he asks for it, repents, is sorry. That response of his is not in your power. But do your part; show that you have forgiven, that you long to pronounce the word, that all the fires of wrath have died down in your heart. Consider how much of life's misery and failure is due to the implacable dis-

position; how the peace of homes is destroyed, how the kindly co-operation of men is prevented, simply by these resentments and tempers and quarrels. It was said that the disastrous charge of the six hundred at Balaclava was due to a blunder, and the blunder was due to the quarrel of two officers who were not on speaking terms. All life is seamed and gangrened and torn asunder by disputes and differences which the forgiving temper might have prevented, but certainly would have cured. On the other hand, the simple act of forgiveness works like magic. It is the real weapon of victory. It can do what arms and violence cannot.

It is related of Bishop Stanley, of Norwich, that when one of his clergy who had been abusing him in the papers came, with much fear and trembling, to ask a favour of him, the Bishop granted the favour with the utmost readiness. This touched the clergyman so deeply that he asked the Bishop's pardon, and confessed that he had been quite wrong in his abuse. "But how was it," he continued, "that you did not turn your back on me? I expected to be refused." "You forget," was the quiet answer, "that I profess myself a Christian."

Yes, it is one of the surest tests of real Christianity. By Christ's own judgment we can judge ourselves. If, dismissing all resentment, quenching the fires of indignation, making allowance for the one who has injured us, fully and freely forgiving him for what he has done, we can turn with the kindlings of love towards him, we have good reason to infer that we are Christians. But if, though holding the faith, so far as we know sincerely, and desiring as we think to do Christ's work in the world, even at the cost of martyrdom, we find that we hate our brother who has offended us, nourishing in our hearts the angry feeling, and ever justifying ourselves for repaying him in his own coin—if a self-examination reveals this disastrous disease within—we may know that something is wrong, we are not what we seem to others and even to ourselves. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his"—the spirit of Christ is that of free, generous, whole-hearted, ever-repeated forgiveness of personal injuries.

Now though Christ did not carry the principle expressly into civil government and international relations, it does, when it is once accepted, carry itself much farther than in its original reference. The principle is there: the only way to subdue enemies is to forgive them, and so to win them; and to cherish the hostile feeling and the vindictive spirit is to hurt ourselves much more than we hurt them.

To take the case of civil punishment first. Is not the Christian principle at last beginning to penetrate the administration of justice? The vindictive aspect of law, the assertion of society's right to punish a criminal for an offence against itself, is constantly making way for this other principle that all society wants is to prevent the criminal from repeating his crime and to deter others from imitating him. Judges and justices frequently try the possibilities of pardoning offenders and giving them another chance. We begin to recognise that offences against society come largely from perverted and irresponsible minds, or are the effect of injuries which society has inflicted on the criminals. The judicial procedure therefore partly is, and more and more will be, to discover whether the accused is, strictly speaking, responsible, or intrinsically insane, and partly is to reform those things in the social system which impel or seduce men to crime. More and more the law adopts the humane and Christian principle *omnia nosse est omnia ignosse*, to know all is to pardon all. Pardon is essentially the cure of crime. Unravel the entanglement of the criminal mind; trace the motives, the complexes, which have led to the forgery, the theft, the burglary, the rape, the murder; and it is found that it is all a product of bad nurture, bad surroundings, a kind of insanity produced by insane, or insanitary, conditions. Society has gravely sinned against the sinner before he sinned against society. Why does society drive men into the ranks of thieves and murderers and women into the ranks of prostitutes? The judge's task becomes increasingly that of allotting the blame and of calling on society for reform, while he hands the criminal over to trained experts to find if there is any possible way of restoring him to virtue, and if not, how he may successfully be restrained from vice. Retributive justice is losing its prestige.

Punishment is a word passing out of date. Justice means now dealing fairly with the mentally deficient, or the perverted and semi-insane victims of a cruel and unjust society.

The Borstal method is marvellously recovering juvenile criminals ; what is needed is its extension to adults. The incurables are very few, and they should be kept in suitable asylums out of the way of mischief, but treated still with great compassion, as the victims of our blundering legislation or defective industrial system.

Thus Christ's law of forgiveness is quietly extending itself to the law courts. Punishment is also losing its place in the education and training of the young. It is not really necessary. Dr. Saunderson, the head master of Oundle for thirty years, showed that it was not necessary. In the future a school which finds punishments necessary will be pronounced inefficient. Nature punishes, or if we think it right to say so, God punishes. But men's business with the young is to bring them up in right ways and teach them, so that punishment is never needed. The only punishment that a true teacher needs to inflict is the sense of displeasure for wrongdoing. I have known a girl's school conducted on that principle, with such effect that the dread of the beloved mistress's disapproval and grave rebuke was far more powerful than the threat of severe penalties in other schools. Dr. Saunderson showed that boys no less than girls can be educated on the same principle.

For, is it not becoming very plain, as Christ, the Light of the World, shines more widely and more penetratingly on human society, that there is only one Judge of the world possible, viz. He who knows all and therefore can pardon all ? We are not wise enough, we do not know enough, to pass judgment on one another. The only attitude possible for us all is that of forgiveness.

Conceive a wise judge like Matthew Hale solemnly passing sentence on a witch, a poor deranged creature, who has been driven by the opinions and terrors of her neighbours to confess that she has had traffic with the devil, to be subjected to the ordeal of being thrown into the pond with her hands tied, on the misunderstanding that if she

floats she is innocent and if she is drowned she is guilty! Could anything be more absurd than that ermined ignorance and cruelty? The judge himself is the soul of honour and goodness; but in good faith he is administering a law which is the soul of ignorance and superstition and brutality.

And though the master of a school seems so vastly superior to his scholars that, at first blush, he must be allowed the right to teach them and to punish them if they will not learn, the wiser he is the more readily he admits that his superiority is only that of age and knowledge, not intrinsic but acquired, and that the sensitive or stupid child before him is entirely beyond him, a mystery of God's creation, which he can only handle with diffidence and reverence.

No human being ever was wise or good enough to be a despot. No one can be entrusted with arbitrary power. The only people who are fit to use such power are just they who decline to use it, they who see in others, even in the young and ignorant, a nobility and greatness which they dare not violate.

It is only the forgiving temperament which is fit to wield any sceptre or to hold any reins of authority.

And in international relations. Here the law and principle of Christ penetrate very slowly. Many Christians who have learnt to forgive their own enemies still conceive themselves bound, nationally speaking, to be implacable to their country's enemies. In the Great War, Germany carefully cultivated the spirit of hate, and welcomed as a national anthem a hymn of hate. They vowed never to forgive England; and France vowed never to forgive Germany. And we have among us some whose resentment to the offending nation is so fierce that they will not sing that country's matchless songs or avail themselves of its tireless industry and successful research.

But it is the path of wisdom and common sense to forgive. *Tout comprendre est tout pardonner.* It is time that we saw Germany as she saw herself before the war, hemmed in between two great unfriendly countries, with only the northern seaboard as the outlet for an ever-growing population and ever-expanding industry. She was responsible

for the war, undoubtedly. Her rulers armed her and misled her, and taught her that she must achieve her national expansion by arms on land and sea. When the hour struck and the fully prepared armies were launched against France and then Russia, the German people as a whole, from great professors like Harnack or Eucken down to the simplest peasant, were convinced that they were fighting for their national integrity and expansion against a ring of implacable enemies, whose victory would mean the arrest and possibly the extinction of Germanic culture. So they thought, and so they fought and suffered, and failed and perished. We should be merciful, we should forgive. We should expel the poison of hatred from our national life.

CHAPTER XVI

"GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE"

THE immediate intention of this inimitable story of the Good Samaritan is to show how an alien and even a heretic can be a truer neighbour to a man in distress than even the clergy of his own country. "Do likewise" means therefore, primarily, "Show mercy and give help to those of other races, other opinions, other religions than your own." But the moral appeal of the story carries us much farther and deeper, and becomes an urgent command to do good to all men, to be always and in all circumstances ready to fly to the help of the needy, to be the knight errants of the unfortunate, to be the steady and habitual workers for the welfare of mankind, for the healing and the improvement of human society. A true Christian is ever and everywhere and in every complication of circumstances a Good Samaritan.

There is a grim story told by Hudson Taylor[1] of the utter callousness of some Chinese fishermen. Crossing a river in a junk, one of the party fell overboard and was carried down the stream. Hudson Taylor made every effort to save him. Seeing some fishermen with a drag-net in a boat close by, he appealed to them to use their net. They replied, "It is not convenient." "But," he cried, "there's a man perishing." That was none of their business. It does not appear that any rules of Confucius or precepts of Buddha require such an act of mercy to a stranger in difficulty. But when Hudson Taylor offered to give the men five dollars, they began to bargain; they would come to the help of the drowning man for twenty dollars, nothing less. He had not so much, but he promised them all he

[1] *Story of the China Inland Mission*, vol. i, p. 158.

had, about fourteen dollars. Then leisurely then came with their net to drag up the drowning man. They brought him up—dead. Then, without the least concern, they began to haggle for payment and returned to their fishing. They recognised no obligation whatever to help a fellow-creature or to save a human life. Hudson Taylor does not tell the story in order to bring out the callousness of the Chinese—though the hardness and indifference of the unregenerate human heart are sufficiently appalling; his purpose rather is to bring home to us all the hardness and indifference of the Christian Church in letting the world perish for want of the gospel entrusted to her care for the good of mankind. That is a just rebuke, and from the lips of a Hudson Taylor, who has sacrificed and toiled to bring the gospel to China, it may come to us with force and conviction. But Christianity has made a difference, which becomes very striking when Christendom is compared with the conservative and unchanged civilisation of China. Christ's word and spirit have so far reached our whole population that it has become an instinct to reach out a helping hand, to try to save a human life. The readiness to help others in distress, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to cure the sick, to visit the prisoner, proposed from the very first as Christ's test of discipleship, has become a trait of all Christian communities. If individuals are callous and selfish their conscience reproaches them; they feel bound to offer apologies; they know that they are their brothers' keepers, and they cannot wash their hands of responsibility.

Nor has this command of Christ been limited to individuals in need. It has led to the countless and varied philanthropic efforts which came into being in the early days of Christianity and have ramified and multiplied down to this day. The vast ministry of healing, with its hospitals and homes, its doctors and nurses, its schools of research and experiment, reproducing on an immense scale Christ's own ministry of healing in the days of His flesh, is the outcome of this command. All the attempts at social reform, trying to find expression in legislation, or in education, or in voluntary societies for particular ends, spring from the same source.

The efforts to save the lost, lift the fallen, restore the wanderer, which are made in all Churches, and sometimes break the formal shackles of Church organisation and start on a new organisation of their own, such as the Salvation Army or the Y.M.C.A., have their source in that "Go thou and do likewise."

This is the spring of the missionary enterprise. Those first Moravian missionaries set out with half a crown in their pockets to save the frozen Esquimaux, the degraded negroes of the West Indies, the scarce-human aborigines of Australia, with that command in their hearts. It was this which took John Williams to the cannibals of the Southern Seas and brought him to his death at their hands on the beach of Erromanga. This took Moffat and Livingstone to the heart of darkest Africa. The personal life of Livingstone, written by Dr. Blaikie, shows how closely the great pioneer walked in Christ's footsteps, trying to staunch that open sore of the world, the Arab slave-trade. I heard Grenfell of Labrador describe his work among those frozen denizens of the Polar Seas, and he took as his text the Good Samaritan. It was that which had led him to relinquish all thoughts of professional success and to go out to the most neglected and most needy of his fellow-creatures, for whom Christ died.

And Albert Schweitzer went to the Ogowe river, leaving university culture and the rapture of music behind him, because the sufferings of the negroes in Central Africa appealed to him just as the wounds and the helplessness of that "certain man who went down to Jericho" appealed to the Good Samaritan.

The missionary enterprise is not proselytism, but mercy. It is not the lust of ecclesiastical power which maintains it, but that word of Christ for ever haunting those who believe in Him: "Go thou and do likewise."

This word, then, has greatly influenced the world and affected men's conduct to one another. It has made a large part of the world recognise a duty to the less favoured, less advanced, less civilised populations; it has brought out a conscience for humanity. "I will have mercy and not sacrifice" on the lips of Jesus has come to be a deep con-

viction that religion is shown in acts of mercy rather than in ritual observances. The Church is traced not by the formalities of the priest and the Levite, but by the ministrations of the Good Samaritan.

But the commandment, with all its authority, raises many practical questions which are not always sufficiently thought out. With every desire and intention to "go and do likewise," we fail because opportunity takes us unprepared, or, ready to take an opportunity offered, we do not seek or make opportunities for ourselves. "Evil is wrought by want of thought more than by want of heart." Still more true is it that good remains undone for want of thought. The heart prompts to endless benevolence and philanthropy; in a novel, at a play, perhaps under the influence of a great speech or a great movement, we feel an immense impulse to help the suffering, to redress the wrongs of mankind. But not having thought things out, not having made the channels in which love may flow, we do nothing, and the impulse dies away. And by the really alarming law of our moral nature, that emotions which do not lead to action cease presently even to move to action, and in the end are prohibitory of action, we become blind to our opportunities, and acquiesce in what we suppose is our destiny, to accomplish nothing. Enough that we have felt, let others do! This is the attitude of a large part of modern society. Feeling, generous emotion, is not wanting. But the practical effort, the self-denying and persistent enterprise, to which the feeling should lead, is rare. We have exhausted ourselves in histrionic emotions. The stage, the cinema, exciting fiction, work up and work off the feelings which ought to produce social service on a large scale. We are a "stage-struck" population, rich and poor, living on imaginary situations, cultivating spurious emotions, mistaking the endless succession of excitements for real life and achievement. What we need is to think. To use Butler's expression, the expression which explains his own lasting service in the region of ethics and religion, we should "sit down in a calm moment and think out" the situation.

First of all comes the question: Granted that we are

bound to relieve distress which comes to our notice, are we bound to seek out distress which is close at hand, but does not come to view? If we ought to seek out the distress of the suffering and oppressed, how far ought we to seek? Our "neighbour" is, according to Christ's suggestion, anyone in distress. Now that the world is drawn into so narrow a compass, and all parts of it are in communication, the sorrows of all men are, as it were, at our door. A famine in Russia touches us; the exploited natives of the Congo, or of Putumayo, are our brothers, and demand our sympathy and help. The Christian population under Turkish rule calls for our deliverance. All the world over the White Slave Traffic appeals, as the cry of a sister in the house would call us to save her from outrage and shame. Opium, morphine, cocaine, as well as ardent spirits, are poisoning, maddening, ruining whole populations. How can we stand by and see the ravages wrought by the greed and cruelty of man to man? In a word, the appeals are ceaseless, boundless, universal; and if we are to charge ourselves with all the wrongs and sorrows of humanity, how can our labours ever have an end? And feeling the impossibility of undertaking so vast a crusade, how shall we save ourselves from despair, and from the dogged resolution that because we can do so little we will do nothing?

These are very agitating and even tormenting questions. Let us try to answer them by going behind them and watching our Master at work. On the one hand, He was always engaged in a ministry of help and healing and teaching; but on the other hand, He never seemed in a hurry, never did He allow the vast undone to prevent Him from doing, as it were, leisurely and serenely, the small task which at that particular moment could be done.

If in imagination we can picture the state of the world during those thirty-three years of His life—the Roman Empire, with all the wrongs and vices and calamities recorded by Tacitus and Suetonius, the ancient Empire of China already settling down on its past and turning its eyes backwards, Japan strong in Buddhism and Shintoism, so scornfully superior to the unknown West, Africa sunk in the curse of Ham, America a world of idolatry and savagery

untouched by Europe, Australia and the South Seas belonging to an epoch of primeval man dying out—it is a sight to fill us with awe and admiration, the Son of Man, the Saviour of the World, doing the little deed of the moment in that obscure province of the Empire, in that despised Galilee, in that small hill-town of Nazareth, with an unhasting and unresting thoroughness, as if He were unconcerned about anything else. He is engaged in healing an impotent man at Jerusalem: He is talking to a woman by the well of Sychar: He is telling His parables to a crowd on the lakeside: He is going up to Jerusalem to die a felon's death on a cross. It is all stupendous. Evidently He knows that those small obscure deeds have a universal significance; He presses the notes of a keyboard, and the music swells out in the upper regions and rolls over the world. He is acting all the time on a principle that nothing is great or small in the eyes of God; that every small thing done faithfully tells on the whole universe, works for all time. Life for Him is lived in such a way that every trifle tells, that the greatest deed could not really tell more than what seems to be the least. A woman puts half a farthing into the Temple treasury: that illumines giving to God for ever. Another woman anoints Him with precious ointment: the story of it will cover the earth, the fragrance of it will fill the house of Time, nay, the house of Eternity. He dies in agony on a cross, and that is the world's salvation, the forgiveness of sins, the opening of the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. Now, as we watch the world's Redeemer at His work in the field of time, do we not begin to see an answer to our questions?

The one thing needful is that we should have it ever in our thought to do all the good to the world of which we are capable. That is to be a master-principle of life. What am I here for? Answer: To do good, to do all the good I can. "I shall not pass this way again: let me, therefore, do to-day the good which lies to my hand, and so leave it." This purpose deliberately adopted and steadily pursued lights up everything, and opens the eyes to boundless possibilities.

But if it is the fixed and steady purpose of life to do good,

and to do all the good possible, it quickens every faculty into activity, it discovers what faculty is hidden in you, what talent you possess, what line of doing good will for you be the most fruitful. Doing good is no longer spasmodic, casual, accidental: it is a policy of life, which directs the energies to a training, a preparation, a discipline. It is quite evident that I cannot help everybody, I cannot relieve all distress, I cannot advocate every good cause, I cannot work along all lines of service. I shall do most by finding out my particular qualifications, by laying down as clearly as possible the lines on which I can move, by throwing myself whole-heartedly into the work to be done, and by learning Christ's serenity in leaving what I cannot do.

In a word, give all your attention to find what you can do, the best you can do; prepare with all your might to do it; and be content to let the rest alone, remit it to the stronger hands and the omniscient wisdom of Him who overrules all and appoints to each the task that is expected of him.

Thus, I have known a man give himself, mind and soul and body, to the work of hospitals, or even of one hospital. All his organising power, all his strength of will, all his power of appeal, are directed to making that hospital as efficient and as effective as possible. That man may pass many beggars in the street as he goes to and fro; he may leave untouched the social problems, the question why there is this festering poverty, this unemployment, this vice and crime all about the hospital. He does not agitate for reform, nor seek a place in Parliament to alter the law. He is the Good Samaritan up to the level of his powers; he is indirectly helping and healing hundreds, though he never himself administers a drug, performs an operation, or touches a sick person. On the other hand, I have known a district nurse spending her days in the homes of the poor, bearing their sorrows, listening to their complaints, wearing herself out in the unceasing strain of sorrow for their sorrows, of ministering to their needs. Both these have "gone and done likewise."

But those of us who have not the leisure to undertake the responsibility for a big institution, and are not trained

for the specific work of nursing, may yet claim our part in the work of the Good Samaritan. In the Great War the whole of society was raised for a time to a nobler level, because, while the men offered themselves for service in the field, the women offered themselves for service at home. Every girl was at work, as a clerk, as a V.A.D., as a *chauffeuse*, as a helper in a Y.M.C.A. hut. The depths of sacrifice and love in the human heart were laid open, and we gazed into them with wonder. All that is wanted is that the same spirit should prevail in peace, and that everyone should accept the sacred responsibility to do his bit or to do her bit. Everyone can do something to relieve the suffering of the world, to find out the way, to help men to walk in it. A few have great gifts, but all have some gift. The salvage of society would come if all would with purpose and consistency use their gifts for the common good. Having determined to the best of our ability what we are capable of doing, having trained ourselves to do it, and having set to work with zeal, we need not distract our minds and weaken our powers by worrying about what we are not doing and not able to do. And for this we have to learn the secret of our Master, that every true service, however slight, is in touch with the whole, has an effect on the whole, is not only particular but universal. It is this secret of Jesus which enables us to work effectively and cheerfully at obscure tasks, to do the thing which comes to hand, and yet to feel that in doing it we are contributing to God's great purpose, promoting His Kingdom on earth. This secret of Jesus is the spring of joy and of effectiveness. Three men were working in a stone-mason's yard. "What are you doing?" said a visitor to each. One answered, "I am just squaring and finishing that stone, as you see." The second answered, "I am working to get my wages to support myself and family." The third said, "I am building a cathedral." That assuredly is the teaching of Jesus: you may do your little part of a great enterprise, feeling that you are doing it all. You may help one person in trouble in such a way that you are helping all the trouble of the world. You may be making a small bolt for a machine, a bolt indispensable for that machine, and the machine

may be making a great thing in which God and man will delight.

I had the privilege of knowing in my college days Edwin Hatch, whose famous Bampton Lecture created a revolution in ecclesiastical theory, whose hymn, " Breathe on me, breath of God," will probably carry his name down to remote generations. He had been a fervent evangelist in his youth, and he was always a man of real devotion; but when I knew him best he was engaged in making a Concordance to the Septuagint. It was very interesting to talk to him about his work. Whatever question of social reform, or of Church reform, or of theological progress might come up, he always came back to that Concordance. He had in his mind a chain of this sort: Every true reform depends on religion; religion depends on a right understanding of revealed truth; the interpretation of revelation depends upon the knowledge of the New Testament Greek. That New Testament Greek cannot be understood without a knowledge of the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament. That knowledge of the Septuagint is hindered for want of a Concordance such as Cruden made of the English Bible, or such as Bruder made of the Greek Testament. Therefore, to work, week in and week out, until death comes and cuts short my labours, at the Concordance of the LXX!

That is the secret of all effectual work for men, to see the bit that we are capable of doing, and to work at it in view of the whole, undistracted and unweakened by the vastness of the enterprise which depends upon the co-operation of countless workers under the Great Taskmaster's eye.

And in doing the service, however small, we may, recognised or unrecognised, reach the whole world and affect the whole course of human history; something from our hand may go forth to live and work and serve the future hour.

The patron saint of the city of Lucca was Santa Zita, whose story is told with inimitable charm in Francesca Alexander's *Wayside Songs of Tuscany*. How has this lowly saint won such a place and endowed her city with a

lasting name? She was only a servant-girl, moved by the love of God. She fed the hungry, and her master encouraged her charities; he bore patiently when she gave his rich cloak to a shivering beggar (the more so when he discovered that it was the Lord, Who in the beggar's form had asked for it). She took a homeless wanderer into the house, gave him her bed and slept herself on the floor. This was all. The humble girl at her death was adopted by the city as its patron saint. "Go thou and do likewise," says the Master. It rings in our ears. Christlikeness means to be always bent on doing good to others, to train ourselves to do the best of which we are capable, and, in unremitting service and devotion, to leave cheerfully and trustfully to God all that we cannot do.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ESTEEM OF THE POOR

The attitude of Christ to material riches, and to those who possess, or do not possess it, is very remarkable. It may be even said to constitute His distinguishing characteristic as a man among men. If we venture to face the significance of His being God among men, all His words and acts take on a deeper and more searching truth. But even as a man amongst men He has this distinctive mark: riches have no glamour for Him; poverty seems to Him no disqualification, nor even a disadvantage. He honours all men, it is true, and the rich among them, but not more than the poor. One of His great followers, St. Bernard, was said to fear no man, but to reverence all; that was a trait which he derived from the Master. As a poor man Himself, He never sought to be rich; and His poverty gave Him easy access to all sorts and conditions of men. The poor were never afraid of Him; and the rich (is it not an evidence of the inward working of truth in all men?) were curiously drawn to Him: they came to Him by night if they were ashamed to come by day; they invited Him to their tables; they climbed up the trees to see Him, and were honoured when He proposed to come to their houses; they undertook for Him a costly burial, so that a prophecy seemed to be fulfilled: He was with the rich in death.

All this unexpected attitude towards wealth and the owners of it becomes a key to human life and to the world's development if we see Christ as the first disciples saw Him. He was the Eternal Son, Who was rich, and for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might become rich. He was moving among men for their salvation, having intrinsically all material powers and possessions at His

disposal, but deliberately refusing to employ any of these supposed advantages, that He might show to men the moral and spiritual values.

> The rank is but the guinea stamp,
> The man's the gowd for a' that.

Burns was a ploughman vindicating the intrinsic value of his manhood against the scorn of the plutocrat. Jesus was God, showing to men by word and example that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things that he possesses, that man as man is the jewel in God's eyes, apart from all material goods, and that man should treat his fellow-man as the God and Father of all treats him.

This, then, may without any hesitation be called the characteristic, the divine and supernatural teaching of Christ. And His commandment shapes itself in the great thought : " Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth."

And this precept, which from the standpoint of God is fundamental to human welfare, and proved to be fundamental by Christ's very presence, and the mode of His presence, among men, reveals itself also as fundamental to human happiness and progress by the now well recognised fact that all our social distresses, all the disorder of our common life, may be traced to the violation of this commandment. Nothing is more demonstrated in human experience than this, that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.

Now as this is a fundamental commandment of Christ, enforced by so many parables and definite statements, as well as by the example of His whole life, it is a startling reflection that it is this commandment more than any other that is neglected, discounted, or flatly disobeyed. And there is this peculiarity in the disobedience to this commandment, that while Christ's other commandments are disobeyed with a consciousness of disobedience, this commandment is disobeyed not only with no consciousness of disobedience, but even with complacency and self-congratulation. While others of His commandments are generally disobeyed, but by believing disciples kept with strenuous effort and prayer, this commandment is disobeyed by

believing people with as much insouciance as it is by the world at large. And because the Church disobeys this commandment, even as the world, the world despises and reproaches the Church. And it is true to say that as the neglect of this commandment is the cause of all the evils which afflict society, the Church, by her indifference to this commandment, is, in a very distinct way, the cause of the religious indifference and unbelief that abound in the world.

If we were to believe in Christ and to show our faith by obedience, we should look at our fellow men and women with clear and undazzled eyes, and should appraise them according to their intrinsic worth, without any reference to their wealth. A good poor man would be treated with more respect than a rich bad man. Deference would be paid to each person, and not to the clothes or the house or the equipage in which each lives and moves among men.

The world's way openly and confessedly is to estimate a man by his money. " How much is he worth ? " never means, " What are his intrinsic qualities and values ? " but only, " What is his income or stored-up capital ? " That is " worth " in the eyes of the world ; the " unworthy " man is the poor ; the " worthless " man is the destitute. So it was, and is, in the world, the world " that gulf of souls " as the poet Young called it. But in the Church, the Church which Christ bought with His blood, the Church for whose sake He became poor, how is it in His Church ?

In the earliest record we have of a Christian assembly and of a Christian community we find the evil leaven already at work, though James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, is trying to expel it : " If there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing ; and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place : and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool ; are ye not divided in your minds and become judges with evil thoughts ? Hearken, my beloved brethren : did not God choose them that are poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him ? But ye have dishonoured the poor man."

That might be intelligible in the first century, when the new light of Christ was piercing the pagan darkness and the shadows had not fled away. But here in the twentieth century, honestly, how does it stand? In a Christian Church is equal honour paid to the rich and to the poor? Is a man of wealth, living in a fine house, clad in fine clothing, able to draw large cheques, treated precisely according to his *spiritual* value? Is the poor man "chosen rich in faith" honoured and welcomed according to his spiritual endowment? Rather, it is still rare to find any Church, any churchman, any ecclesiastical authority, that has grasped this simple and fundamental commandment of the Lord and Master. The Church, in the broadest sense, Catholic and Protestant, Established and Free, certainly gives to the outside world the impression that it still in the main estimates men by their possessions, courts and pays deference to the rich, slights and overlooks the poor. How can the Church convert the world, and bring the world to God, when it is really itself worshipping the world's god, Mammon?

In that early Christian document there is a vehement denunciation of the rich; we should like to think it refers to the rich outside the Church; but we fear it is addressed to those within who had grown rich, perhaps by practising the Christian virtues. "Go to, now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted; and their rust shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh as fire. Ye have laid up your treasure in the last days. Behold the hire of the labourers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out: and the cries of them that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived delicately on the earth and taken your pleasure; ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned, ye have killed the righteous one; he doth not resist you."

If it is difficult to believe that in that first age there were within the Church people to whom such words could be addressed, it is only too easy to believe that in these later days there have been in the Church those to whom they

are applicable. I visited in an old English town not long ago a church which had once been famous. The handsome and capacious building, though now in what seems a slum, bears many memorials of the time when the people of wealth and position crowded it to hear one of the most famous preachers of his time (it is not yet a century ago !). But now it is empty, and the swarming people about its doors would as readily think of entering it as of taking a journey to the Antipodes. Within sight of the porch are some great works, which had belonged to one of the principal members of the Church, a pillar of the Church. He, or his firm, had been brought to book for a treatment of the workpeople to which the words of St. James might have been applied. That greed of gain, that callous indifference to the workers by whom the wealth was attained, exhibited in a Christian, in a prominent supporter of the Church, had produced the inevitable result. It is still one of the most active causes in alienating the working people from the Christian Church, that employers who are in the Church treat employees very much in the same hard and grasping way as other employers do who are not in the Church.

For this cause, among others, the name of Christ is blasphemed among the Gentiles. But, turning back to the commandment of Christ, and His great thought that our business is to be " rich towards God " rather than rich in worldly possessions, and that we are to apprehend human worth in such a way that we can recognise it in Lazarus at the gate of the rich man, or in the poor widow casting in her mite, we perceive that Christ's thought is not so much to depreciate riches as to appreciate men. His objection to riches, we surmise, essentially is that it claims for its owner a reverence which is not due, and prevents men from paying reverence where it is due. Money depreciates men : men can only be appreciated and treated according to their deserts when the money can be left out of the question altogether. He made us understand (and His faithful followers everywhere still understand) that a human being, a personality, is infinitely more precious than silver and gold, so precious that no material wealth could buy it, and even the precious blood of Christ would be shed to redeem

it. He showed us something of infinite and unique value in a human soul. He never had any money, so far we as know. If He wanted to pay the Temple didrachma He could only obtain it by a miracle. If there was money given to the group of His disciples to purchase the necessaries of life, He never touched it. And evidently the chief use of those alms was to give to the poor. It was only as an exceptional indulgence, in view of His death, that He allowed the valuable spikenard to be poured on His head.

And yet even the most careless observer, looking back, will see and own that this penniless, property-less Man was not only the greatest that ever lived, but also more valuable to the world than all the treasure with which the earth teems. This at least He has made evident, that property is quite secondary, that a man's value lies in his character, in his word, in his activity, in his service to the world.

And not without reason did the man who has been the most Christlike of all the sons of men come to Christ on the basis of an absolute renunciation of all his property, and maintain his service to Christ by espousing Poverty as his bride. Go to that pictured vault in the lower church of St. Francis at Assisi, and look at the saint through the eyes of Giotto, who looked back from the distance of a hundred years and saw what had been done by the Poverello, the little poor man of Assisi. There are the nuptials of the saint, and he is espousing the ragged bride, Poverty. The world looks on in amazement or scorn, and a *gamin* in the foreground is picking up a stone to throw at the deluded pair! But how that bridal gripped the world! And though the Franciscan Order quickly left St. Francis, as the Church quickly left Christ; though the Order gathered in wealth and built great convents and churches, and declined, and became for a time in its preaching friars a byword for greed and hypocrisy, the example of the Founder abides, even as the example of our Lord Jesus Christ abides in His Church. Il Poverello is, next to his Master Christ, the most potent example and ideal in Christendom.

How is it that with our heart's passionate acclaim of Christ in His absolute renunciation, and of His faithful servant, Francis of Assisi, we yet, not only as individuals

but as Churches, continue to judge men by their wealth, to seek wealth, to lay it up where moth and rust corrupt, to ask for wealth as the indispensable means of propagating a gospel which was fundamentally the contempt and repudiation of it? How is it that one millionaire after another, bequeathing the wealth that he has laid up on earth, contrary to the commandment of Christ, will enter in his will an apparently sincere profession of faith in Him, and will commit his soul to His eternal keeping in the same breath that he disposes of the laid-up wealth which has been accumulated in defiance of His order!

The answer can only be that we have not laid to heart this commandment of Christ, have not seen how fundamental it is. We were not taught as children; we did not receive this instruction from the pulpit. We were told that we must be good, that we must be unselfish, that we must control our temper, that we must be truthful; but when were we ever told that Christ required of us this disregard of wealth, this equal treatment of our fellow-creatures, irrespectively of their positions? Were we not led as children, from all that we heard others say, to look with respect on the wealthy, to gape at lofty and important people almost with awe? Did we not get the impression in our early days that to get on, to amass wealth, to live in luxury and have everything at our disposal, was the main object of life? The view was so congenial to us that the only way to countervail it was to point us constantly to Christ in His poverty, not as an object of pity, but as our example. The parable of Dives and Lazarus should have been the passage of Scripture learnt by heart as central and final, but was it ever impressed upon us in that way?

I remember learning from my grandmother:—

> Whene'er I take my walks abroad
> How many poor I see!
> How thankful should I be to God
> For all His gifts to me!

That was Jane or Ann Taylor, but had nothing to do with the gospel of Christ. I ought to have been taught: "Know

ye not that God hath chosen the poor in this world rich in faith ? " or, " Blessed are ye poor ! " And if as children we were ill-taught, as we grew older there was nothing in the pulpit, or the papers, in Smiles's *Self-Help* or the other literature that came in our way, to correct the mistake.

You might hear in the pulpit that what was required of us was to obey the Church, to receive the sacraments, and to contribute liberally to the Church's funds. Or in other quarters you might hear that to believe in Jesus was what was required of you, to believe in His Cross, the propitiatory sacrifice for sin, salvation by faith without works : but it was not suggested that to believe in Jesus meant also to believe in the meaning of His voluntary poverty, or in the intense earnestness of His warning against Mammon and commandment not to lay up treasure upon earth.

The error showed itself with special clearness in very pious circles. Here is a typical experience of what has happened all over the country : There were three business men who raised themselves from the position of workmen to that of successful and wealthy manufacturers. Everything prospered in their hands. They were members of a Church which they supported with great liberality, and they reared a noble building which stands as a lasting monument of their devotion. But they were never taught this commandment of Christ, which is so plain in the gospel ; they took in some figurative sense such passages as the parables of Dives and Lazarus and the rich fool ; and if they taught their children anything by word of mouth it was nullified by their example. Their families grew up, but did not follow in the steps of their fathers. I remember one of the boys, who was a schoolfellow of mine, telling me that money was the only important thing in life ; several of these in the second generation kept their inherited fortune, and in some sort prospered ; but when the third generation appeared, there was nothing left of the piety or public service of those three brothers ; the family vanished from the district, and only the three brothers were remembered.

No, we have been ill-taught. Christ had in his example and teaching the principle by which industrial development would have been a blessing, the industrial revolution would

have been rendered innocuous, and the rapid increase of production might have brought an equally diffused good to all. The principle was that men, not money, constitute a nation's wealth, that the human personality, not the accidental possessions, was the standard by which all were to be appraised, that the object of life never can be the accumulation of wealth, but its right distribution and use, for the common welfare. But this great and fundamental truth was withheld, hidden, camouflaged by all kinds of erroneous spiritualising. The Church, depending so pathetically on money for its upkeep, could not bring itself to believe that Christ really meant to slight this necessary means of His own work! Those who had money, therefore, must be courted, put in the chief seats, raised to the positions of influence and direction. Those who had no money were thrust down to the lower places. The blunt candour of the Northern farmer, "The poor, in a lump, are bad," was not actually endorsed by the Church; but it was modified into: "are useless for the upkeep of the Church."

And this neglect of a commandment of Christ, steady, systematic, though I think unintentional neglect, has involved us in the disasters which are now becoming only too evident. I remember hearing Dr. Mackennal, of Bowdon, thirty years ago, preach on the text: "A man shall be as the gold of Ophir." With a strange passion he tried to bring out the preciousness of human personality in the sight of God, and confessed that his inability to make the truth effective had made his life a kind of torment. But no: men would not believe in the worth of man as such; it was always the possessions which they regarded and weighed. For centuries the workers were slaves, bought and sold as chattels. Up to the Civil War in America the preachers of the Church defended the position on scriptural, on religious grounds. When they ceased to be slaves they were still "hands." And when at last they were recognised as men, they were distinguished, by a subtle and incredible depreciation, as "working men." Yes, in pulpits as well as in the Press; in the thoughts, and often on the lips, of the possessing classes, here in this Christian country and within the memory of those living, the workers, through

whom the wealth was produced, were despised by those who appropriated and consumed it, as if they were inferior because they were workers, and must bow down and reverence their masters for graciously employing them and accepting the results of their toil. All our industrial and social troubles here in England, in Europe, in America, arise essentially from the violation of this one commandment of Christ. And no remedy will or can be found until men everywhere accept the axiom, true as any axiom in mathematics: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesses"; until men everywhere will consent to judge others and to be judged by Christ's standard, and to act therefore to others, and allow others to act to them, entirely according to the "Word made flesh," the Son of Man who was and is the Son of God.

This is the gospel we have to preach and exemplify in this modern world. It lies at the root of all reform and all redemption. It is such an old commandment; and yet it is so neglected, so ruled out, so disguised, that it comes with all the force of a new commandment when our eyes begin to open to the truth of Christ.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; thou shalt estimate wealth in human welfare; thou shalt treat all men entirely on the basis of what they are in themselves, and not on the basis of what they have.

In this human Eden the serpent whose lying tongue is ever whispering in our ears, the serpent on whose head the foot of the Redeemer is to trample, is that insinuating, false, malicious and ruinous suggestion that a man's life does consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses, and therefore we must now treat our fellow-men according to a standard of material wealth, honouring those who *have*, neglecting those who *have not*, instead of by the standard which Christ has given, Who became poor that men might be rich, Who died for all men, and has ever found among the poor His most faithful believers and servants. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

CHAPTER XVIII

HONESTY

In Dante's great allegory, the two poets descending the circles of Hell find, in the eighth circle of the Malebolge, Fraud lower than Violence or Sensuality ; indeed, it is the passage to the lowest Hell ; the descent is made from the region of animal impulse to that of the calculating disregard of the Divine and the social bond ; where the soul says :—

> Farewell, remorse ; all good to me is lost ;
> Evil, be thou my good.

Indeed, Virgil and Dante cannot *walk* into that awful abyss ; but can only be carried down on the monster which is called Geryon. So abrupt is the descent, so hideous is the state reached, that this strange parti-coloured complex creature is invented to explain how the soul could ever reach that depth. Deceit, whose hidden root is in every heart, is brought to full form and view in this " beast with the pointed tail, which passes mountains and breaks walls and arms, and fills with stench the whole world." Dante's hatred of the loathsome beast is unutterable ; but he describes it calmly as its head approaches the marble causeway on which the poets are walking, and they are invited to mount on the monstrous form for the descent. The face was that of a just man ; the external skin was kindly ; but the serpent body had hairy paws and arms, the tail waved in the air, with a sting at the tip, like a scorpion —it was mongrel, man, reptile, beast—and the skin was painted with knots and spots, many-coloured like the banners of Tartars or Turks, and tissues like the webs of spiders.

Such is Dante's singular externalisation and organic articulation of deceit. " We see reflected as in a mirror,"

says the author of *Dante's Pilgrim's Progress*, " our desires to look better than we are, self-interested motives hidden under specious actions or words, divers colouring given to match divers objects, nooses to entrap others, or even our own consciences, and the subtle tissues of flatteries that entangle with sophistries and plausibilities."

Dante has a fierce resentment against deceit. In his grim way he speaks of meeting friends of former days in other circles of the Inferno ; but in this circle of fraud he encounters no one whom he knew. " My soul, come not into their counsels, and partake not of their meat ! " Perhaps, in the Italy of his day, the fraud, the treachery, the flattery, the subtlety, the dissimulation were worse than in any country or in any other period. One's involuntary exclamation in reading any story of mediæval Italy is, " The way of truth have they not known." Take that autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, which gives an inimitable picture of Dante's Florence two centuries after Dante hurled his objurgations on it. Certainly all the world was at that time filled with the stench of this monster, deceit.

But Dante's revolt is that of all noble souls, which must by their nobility be intrinsically truthful and sincere, against this hideous frailty of our human nature. To such souls the definition of Heaven is " a home which can never be entered by that which thinketh or maketh a lie."

The peculiar horror of deceit is that it always begins in self-deceit, in what Plato called the " lie in the soul." Men deceive others because they have first deceived themselves. It is a suicidal vice. Every lie a man tells proceeds out of a lie he has first told himself. He deceives others much, but himself more. The lie recoils always and inevitably on himself ; he told the lie to save himself, to benefit himself, never doubting that he would profit by it ; but the lie did not in the end profit him at all—on the contrary, it infected him, it poisoned him, it ruined him.

We have had before us recently a tragedy which must have made the most self-confident of us tremble. A man of great and varied ability, filling a great place in the public eye, admired, followed, perhaps even loved, by a vast number of his fellows, fell into a gigantic fraud, and for robbing others on a

vast scale was sent to imprisonment ; his appeal was in vain ; the sentence was confirmed. And yet it is very plain that he had deceived himself before he deceived others. His eloquent and impassioned defence was in a sense obviously sincere : he verily believed no jury could convict him ; he thought the sword of justice would fall from its place if he were condemned. Undoubtedly he had completely cajoled himself ; he was in his own eyes quite innocent ; how call that fraud which was perpetrated with the best intentions ? How is it stealing to borrow from others, without their knowledge, what you quite mean to repay ? There is something shattering in a fall like this : but what it ought to shatter is our self-confidence, our self-delusions. " Who can understand his errors ? Cleanse me from my secret sins. Let me know myself as I am. Let me not deceive myself while I think I am deceiving others "—that is the kind of prayer which this tragical event elicits, that, and the further petition : " Have mercy on the man who has thus dragged himself down into the abyss ! "

But that power of self-deception—" the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked "—as we can sometimes trace it in others, ought we not to expose it in ourselves ? I remember hearing, when I was a young man, a leader in the Holiness Movement tell a large audience that he was without sin ; for fifteen years he had not sinned. I took it as a revelation of human perfection, and never questioned the sincerity of the speaker, who had a stainless reputation in the religious world. But some years later he abruptly and finally disappeared from view. In the midst of a Holiness Convention he was caught by one of his most fervent supporters in the very act of sin. And a little later, greeted in the train by one who recognised him and wished to thank him for help he had given, he replied : " No more of this ; that is past ; I am an Agnostic." That this man sincerely felt that he had been kept from sin, I cannot question. But what self-deception it was not to recognise that the boast he made was sin, and the self-confidence and spiritual pride which arose from his imagined sinlessness were themselves the sinful prelude to the fall !

It is from that self-deception that all other lies and deceits

proceed. No liar recognises that he is a liar ; the evasion, the camouflaging, the denial, the assertion, all have to him quite another colour ; and he calls them by other names —diplomacy, discretion, legitimate concealment, or truth slightly disguised. The thief does not think of himself as a thief, but rather as a dexterous artist in appropriation. The swindler sees his transaction in the light of legitimate business, and flatters himself that he is benefiting the very people whom he is ruining. Who ever commits any sin acknowledging to himself that it is a sin ? It is always a cruel necessity, or an irresistible wave of passion, or a deed that is forced upon the perpetrator by circumstances. And as with the greater crimes of fraud, so with the lies, white and black, which poison our human life : they come from those who have practised deceit upon themselves until they are unaware that they are sinning. Dante's horror of this sin is only a reflection of Christ's. That censure of the hypocrites, from lips which were accustomed to extenuate heinous sins and freely to forgive them, is astonishing, until we note that it is the " falsity " which stirs the indignation of Him who could say, " I am the Truth." Let those men appear what they were, confessing and deploring it, and Christ would be all compassion and eager to forgive. But with the pretence of exceptional piety, and claims for the respect of others on the ground of impeccable character, they seemed to Him " whited sepulchres full of dead men's bones." That prayer in the Temple : " Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men are," was to the mind of Christ the man's condemnation. That was the sin.

Christ pictured the origin of all evil as " The Father of Lies." Over against him He stood as king because he had come into the world to bear witness of truth.

Accordingly, this comes to us as the definite and unique commandment of Christ, enforced by His own nature, even more than by any specific word : Be true, speak truth, do what is honest in the sight of God and man.

The Church has done incalculable harm by developing, in the interests of the confessional, the doctrine of the economy of truth. In the first instance it may have been

seeking to aid tender consciences; but very quickly the poison of ecclesiastical ambition entered into the discussion of the moral problem; and the theory was evolved that an untruth in the interests of religion, i.e. of the Church, was not to be called a lie; it was only a reservation; it was a sacrifice made of punctilious exactitude, to secure a higher end. This doctrine of the Church, so speciously advanced, split the Church in two and produced Protestantism. When the Jesuits elaborated the doctrine and applied it in detail, the result was more disastrous still; it produced the whole revolt against Christianity, which is the appalling feature of our times.

It is the cunning, the dissimulation, the intriguing, the calculated fraud, employed in the interests of religion, that has set the scientific world, the industrial world, and even the ethical and the spiritual world against religion. Deceit practised in the interest of religion! How can deceit ever benefit religion? How can it do anything but injure that which claims to be the truth? Truth defended by deceit becomes deceit. That fraudulent donative of Constantine, pitilessly exposed by Lorenzo Valla,[1] the Isidorian decretals and other frauds have reacted with crushing effect on the Catholic Church. And all the other compromises and concealments and pretences practised by the Churches come back upon their own heads. It is the falsehood in religion and in its professors which has arrested its growth and discredited its claims.

We return to Christ, the Truth. "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. iii. 9).

It is the whole meaning of Christ, who is the Truth in the world, that those who have put on Him, and have been reborn in His spirit, should be absolutely and always truthful, not only scorning a lie, but finding their lips unable to frame it. Truthful in speech! For that we as a nation have attained a certain reputation in the world. For Englishmen it is a point of honour not to lie: to be called

[1] See Creighton's *History of the Papacy*, vol. iii, p. 170.

a liar, to be suspected of lying, is still a reproach which the Englishman resents. But the reputation is secured by traditions of the past rather than by influences at work to-day. It is undermined by many beliefs and non-beliefs which obtain currency among us. The home teaching is defective. The religious restraints are relaxed.

"But above all, never tell a lie," I heard a mother say to her boy going off to school in the train. I looked at the boy when we steamed out from the platform, and I felt how that plea had sunk in and would abide. Do all mothers and fathers impress this on their children? Do the public schools present a sanction strong enough to enforce the precept? Honour is a powerful motive; but Christ is more powerful.

It is not necessary to discuss whether a lie is ever justifiable. Theoretically one might conceive cases where it might be; but practically they do not occur, or if they do occur, they are met more successfully by the settled habit of telling the truth than by the weakening and demoralising discussions of casuistry beforehand. When Jowett, the Master of Balliol, was pressed by the casuists who tried to make him acknowledge that there were situations in which he would be forced to lie, he remarked: "Well, if there are, I should like to think as little as possible about it beforehand, and to forget it as soon as possible after." But those situations are illusory. Far safer than any defence of prevarication, or excuse for lies told under stress is the resolution never to lie, and the firm faith in God that it will never be necessary to do so. Casuistry prepares the lips to lie when the occasion comes; but the faith in Christ delivers us from the snare, and opens miraculous escapes from the pitfalls which have been cunningly dug for us by the Father of Lies.

But truth in thought and speech leads to truth in action, in the daily dealings, in business, in politics. If any man seeks to obey Christ, the Truth, he will be very scrupulous in his handling of money, and in all his relations with other people, with society, with the State. He will not, for example, take advantage of mistakes made by other people, but will pay what is due to all. Perhaps the simplest and

easiest test of Christ's presence in the life is to be found in details of this kind: a man whom Christ rules will not travel without a ticket because the officials neglect to demand it. He will be as eager to pay for his journey as he would be to be paid if he were a shareholder. Such a man will not use a stamp again because it has been passed through unmarked. He will not lower wages unjustly because the employed are too weak to resist, or withhold perquisites because the employed do not ask for them. There is a justice in the case; he wants to give what is right, not only for the sake of the recipient, but for his own sake, because he feels a stain upon his nature if he does not. A Christian will pay his debts, not from the fear of the county court, but because Christ is in him. He will not evade or postpone, or wait to be dunned; it is part of his very make-up to owe no man anything save to love one another. He will not forget that he owes, because owing itself is a sharp and constant reminder, until the obligation is discharged.

And if he is honest in these external and material things, he will be equally scrupulous in dealing with the character and reputation of others.

> Who steals my purse, steals trash; . . .
> But he that filches from me my good name,
> Robs me of that which not enriches him,
> And makes me poor indeed.

That care for the reputation of others, that fear of saying anything which may hurt or impair a character, that resolute determination to speak evil of no man, to be cautious of speaking about others at all, lest some inadvertent word would injure: this is very decidedly the mark of a Christian.

The satirist spoke of the lady bountiful whose purse supplied the wants of the poor, but if she touched a reputation, it died.[1] So often the tongue undoes what the hand attempts to do. So often we betray ourselves, belie our professions, and dissipate all our affected religion by a loose gossip, a delight in scandal, a subtle and cowardly venom

[1] Whose superfluity the poor supplies,
But if she touch a character, it dies.

in the heart, which will wither with an innuendo or a sneer the fine flower of another soul. A Christian is one who holds it dishonourable to withhold honour that is due, and feels himself personally disgraced if he brings disgrace to anyone by word or deed, or even by withholding a word or deed.

But honesty in business is the supreme result of true Christianity. All who are aiming at Christlikeness will make it their object to be absolutely straight and just and generous in their business transactions. They recognise that such honesty is the greatest national asset, that the reputation of absolute fairness and openness is the foundation on which commerce and international dealings rest, that the great need of the modern world is integrity which creates confidence, and that trust between man and man which carries on great affairs without the hampering fear of fraud and the paralysing suspicion of the other man's good faith. They make it their constant aim, therefore, to be trustworthy, to fulfill their promises, to put justice before covetousness, and to curb the acquisitive instinct with the love of God and of their neighbour. The adage says that honesty is the best policy. But the true Christian is not honest because it is politic ; for he recognises that if it is only policy, it is not in Christ's sense honesty. He would be honest if it were not the best policy ; he is honest when it is not the best policy ; he swears to his own hurt ; he constantly forgoes gain, because he sees that a true love to his neighbour brings greater gain to his neighbour than to him.

Honesty is the best policy, no doubt, in a rough and general way. I have more than once been assured by large and successful manufacturers that the only secret of their success is that they take incessant pains to secure the excellence of the materials they use. To palm off on the public things of inferior quality, ingredients adulterated, material which will not wear, may be the way to a transitory gain, but it is also the surest way to ultimate loss. No doubt, to be absolutely honest and truthful wins trust, and may make a man in a little while indispensable to an employer or to a business. The employee who flatly refuses to lie in the interests of his employer or to misrepresent the goods

that he is selling may incur the employer's wrath, may even be dismissed. But on reflection the employer recognises the value of that sterling moral character. "If this man will not lie for me, neither will he lie to me; if he will not deceive the public, neither will he wish to deceive me: he is invaluable. Is not this just the kind of man we all want? Does not all successful business ultimately depend on men of this sort?" And he will wish to recover the stalwart he has dismissed.

But while, in the long run and the deepest sense, honesty is the best policy, and fearless truth between man and man is greater riches than can ever be acquired by duplicity, chicanery and fraud, honesty also may cost much, may incur loss and even ruin. And the honesty which is of such incalculable value to human society, and on which progress really depends, the honesty which is not utilitarian in its motive, but intrinsic and absolute, comes from Christ, the Truth. It results from knowing the veracity of God, and the openness of all our doings and even thoughts to Him; it results from the habit of living in His sight, from whom no secrets are hid.

And this exalted and redemptive honesty may *not* be the best policy. It may have to be pursued and retained in defiance of consequences. So far from pursuing it for what it may bring you, you pursue it though it may take from you everything. "This course is right," says the Christian to himself again and again. "I lose by it—my rival gains; I forgo advantages which others would without hesitation seize. But what of that? The thing is right, just in the eyes of God. And there is the Cross: the Man crucified because He came to bear witness of the truth. What policy was there in Him? What did He care about consequences?"

And this Christian man fights his own battle in his soul, and slays the falsehood there. He does the right, he loses. He forgoes advantages, and his chances are gone, for God and for right. He ends his days in poverty, dependent on the charity of man or of God. But such a man is the strength of his country. More than any successful man, he makes the fibre, the spiritual tissue of the national character. If the country had any insight it would put him in a House

of Peers, and even displace for him someone who has risen to wealth and bought a peerage because he had no scruples and availed himself of the weakness and ignorance of others, to climb on their backs and over their heads to the seats of the mighty.

No, truth is not the means to the end, but the end itself. I cannot agree with that reflecting mind which said that if he had the choice of truth or the pursuit of truth he would prefer the pursuit. For him, no doubt, the pursuit of truth was like the exhilarating exercise of climbing a high alp; and he concluded that because the prospect from the mountain's summit is disappointing, it is the pursuit rather than the achievement that brings satisfaction. But truth is not the dubious outlook from a terrestrial mountain-peak, it is the central essence of God. "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him—that I might come at Him and abide!" It is not the search for God that is the best thing we can enjoy, it is God Himself, God found, God enjoyed. And truth is God. When Jesus said, "I am the Truth," He was saying that He was God. That is the sufficient and conclusive evidence of His deity. For any man to say, "I am the Truth," is evidence that he is a liar, self-deceived and insane, or a ridiculous hypocrite. But when Jesus said it, He invited us into the very bosom of God, where He had been before the world was.

It is truth we want, to see it, to feel it, to be pervaded by it. Veiled let it be, crepuscular, lest its light should blind us and its glory should consume us. In our finite and imperfect state we may be totally unable to perceive or receive truth in its absoluteness and splendour. But it is that truth to which we aspire, the glory which is at present veiled, the open vision of God.

That same Dante who described with scorn Geryon and the loathsome Circle of the Fraudulent, ascended the mount and penetrated into the heaven of Heavens, and saw that vision. He could not describe it; words failed him; words must for ever fail. But that is our quest, the supreme object of our desire, the beatific vision, the infinite, eternal and absolute truth. From that supreme goal the Father of Lies is ever seeking, by all means in his power,

to detain us, as if the old myth were true, and he were Lucifer driven from that heaven for his apostasy, striving to make all mankind share his doom in the lower regions of lies and subterfuges and counterfeits.

But One has come to show us the truth, to draw us to the truth. His apostles and teachers have been among us, are perhaps even now still among us.

> For rigorous teachers trained my youth,
> And trimmed its lamps and fed its fire,
> Showed me the high white star of truth,
> There bade me gaze and there aspire.

And for His sake, at His command, and by His spirit in us, we strive and labour to be true, to be true to ourselves, that we may not be false to any, to speak no word but what is true ; to be true in all our dealings with men, fraudless, simple, undefiled. This is a great and exacting commandment, imposing on us a constant vigilance and an inexorable self-examination, because we know that the beginning of all deceit is self-deceit, and that in vain we try to speak truth or to do truth, unless we ourselves are true.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SACREDNESS OF CHILD LIFE

CHRIST discovered and revealed the child. That discovery and revelation are so familiar to us now, and His view of children has so permeated Christendom, and even the world, that we with difficulty realise that this was His revelation, and that out of it comes His stringent commandment concerning the child. It is almost incredible to those who do not think that, in the Roman world, the most advanced civilisation when Christ came, it was entirely optional whether a parent "took up," as it was called, and decided to rear, his own child. If he chose to strangle it and to throw it away, there was no law, no religion, no public sentiment to forbid him. Into that hard Roman world Christ came, and with unspeakable tenderness for children He took them in His arms and blessed them. He rebuked the rude, unfeeling grown-up people who would keep them back. He unveiled the amazing truth that "their angels do always behold the face of the Father in heaven." And He inveighed against anyone who should cause one of them to stumble, declaring that it would be better for such an one to have a great millstone tied to his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. It was tremendous! It even sounds exaggerated. But such was the callousness of men about child life, and such was His own sense of its sacredness, that He took these strong measures to transform human judgments. And He succeeded. He changed the whole world's opinion about children. And when the story of His own birth and infancy was consecrated in the exquisite stories which two of the evangelists took pains to record, the revolution of feeling was secured for all time. In B.C. a child might without offence be cast on the rubbish-heap.

In A.D. every child came under the aureole of the Infant Jesus; the innocents whom Herod slew at the time of His birth were regarded as holy, while the tyrant who slew them was treated as the worst of murderers. From that day onwards infanticide became in the eyes of men a sin, and even in the eyes of the law a crime. The holy water of baptism was put upon the children as soon as possible after their birth, to indicate that Christ claimed them and that they were born into His new spiritual kingdom of love and mercy. The age of the child had come, with the coming of the Child Jesus. And slowly, though alas! so slowly, men have begun to realise the reverence due to children, not only to boys who are already adolescent and revealing the promise of a future (that reverence was recognised by Aristotle, and was not unfamiliar even in Rome), but to the infant at the moment of birth, and even before birth, from the moment of conception.

It is only in these later days that the problem of birth and infancy has been taken up by moralists and politicians, publicists and legislators; but Christianity, with the mother and child enthroned in its heart, has always kept the problem before it. And now that the questions concerning nature and nurture, concerning birth-control, infant welfare and mother's care, come to the front in our highly elaborated society, there is the law of Christ long established—nay, there is Christ Himself, who was a child in the midst, to help us with the solution of the problem.

Woe unto them who cause one of these little ones to stumble! How significant it sounds, coming down the ages to our own day! How its meaning opens out, how many bearings it seems to have! What seemed the simplest of precepts expands into a whole system of ethics, into a method of social regeneration, into a new hope for the human race.

For the offence of the little one may be prenatal, or it may be at birth, or it may be in the earliest days of consciousness, or it may be in the years between infancy and adolescence, and most of all it may be from adolescence to maturity. The scandal is various and huge, the world's sin against its little ones, by commission or omission, by

ignorance, by vice, by greed, by lust. The offence is rank, and smells to heaven. And Christ is there, historically, morally, spiritually, pleading the sacredness of child life, pointing to "their angels that behold the face of the Father in heaven," assuring us, parents, teachers, governments, that here is a sin not only irreparable, but unpardonable. Crimes against adults have their excuse, may at any rate be forgiven. But crimes against babes, against the ignorant and helpless, against those who are not yet set and formed and matured, "it were better for those who commit these crimes, any of them, that a millstone should be about their neck and they be drowned in the depths of the sea."

Consider, to begin with, the parents who bring into the world children doomed as it were from the birth, nay, veritably "damned into the world."

It is a cruel and selfish act for a parent with a transmissible disease to bring into his sorrowful inheritance a helpless child. But much more cruel and abominable is it when the disease is not the result of accident or misfortune, but the direct outcome of vicious indulgence.

This wants saying and reiterating, publicly and privately, in pulpits or out of them, until at last it becomes a recognised and inexorable law of modern society: No man or woman has the right to bring into the world children who from their birth are riddled with disease, maimed, blind, deaf, or mentally defective, because their parent or parents have lived viciously. The law cannot enforce this simple ethical rule; but it must be enforced by the higher morality which men must accept and practise, if ever a better world is to be. And that higher morality can only be maintained by the sanction of the sacredness of child life. "See that ye offend not one of these little ones." Resolve at all costs not to be guilty of poisoning your offspring before it is born, of starting it on its life career with death or worse than death in its very blood.

And the birth. With what thought and tenderness and forethought and anticipation would Christ have little children received into this probation of human life. The modern State is beginning to recognise a duty in the birth of its children, to make provision for the mother at the

time of birth, before and after, and even to instruct mothers in the best way of caring for the children in the earliest days of their life; so far as these efforts have gone they have produced a great reduction in infant mortality, and they promise an improvement in the health and efficiency of the population. Eugenics is a new branch of science, founded by one man, Galton, whose name a wiser generation will reverence. It has had to pass through the fusillade of ridicule which stupidity and prejudice direct against any and every attempt to benefit mankind. But the principle is now established, that wise regulations can be made by States and even local governments to secure the best nurture of the coming generation. And as the science becomes more recognised and students devote themselves to its advancement, we may expect a day when human life will be regarded as the State's true wealth, and children will be both born and reared in healthier ways. Christianity has attained a victory here, though the agents through which it works do not always recognise the source of their inspiration.

But when all is done that Governments can fairly hope to do, the task of the parents, and especially of the mother, depends on the individual conscience. Sometimes that task is stated in so formidable a way that married people may shrink from the responsibility of parenthood, or may, when children are born, give up the attempt to care for them and train them, leaving them to God or to Nature. Let us not exaggerate, then; let us not state a mother's responsibility, or even a father's, in such a way as to discourage effort. Let us make all allowance for the adventitious aids which interested relatives, and teachers, and pastors and doctors render to parents in their serious task. Let us recognise how marvellously help comes to the 40,000 children born annually out of wedlock, born, that is, without any holy sanction of parenthood, doomed one would suppose by the very circumstances of their birth to be deprived of moral and spiritual teaching, and even influence. There are wonderful remedial and redemptive forces at work everywhere in God's world. But there are duties of parents which have not been until these recent years fully realised.

Nurture has taken on a larger and a deeper meaning; the silent influences which parents exercise over their children, especially in the earliest years, have come to be recognised And consequently we see now, as was not formerly observed, how we put stumbling-blocks in the way of the little ones by careless words and expressions, by our own gloomy and despondent thoughts, as much as by harsh and unjust actions or deliberate attempts to lead them in evil ways.

Here is a matter to fill a young mother's mind with wonder and gratitude and desire. In the months before her child is born she may, not only by her physical acts but by the thoughts entertained in her mind, colour and shape her child's mind and life. She is bound, therefore, to keep her heart pure, to live during that critical period much with Christ, in holy and elevated thought. She must be happy, cheerful, hopeful, lest she should shroud her babe on entering into the world with the mists and fog of evil imaginations and fears and forebodings. An expectant mother may prepare for the child's coming by having in her heart the fruit of the Spirit, and may welcome the child as Mary welcomed Jesus, as the gift of God through the Spirit.

And when the child is born, immediately the training, good or bad, begins. It is therefore necessary to make it good, consciously to aim at and plan for its goodness. The songs a mother sings to her children influence them possibly for life. Surely the tones of a mother's voice and the expression of her face sink into a baby's very nature, before the outer influences have a chance. If the mother wears an anxious expression, if she has a querulous voice, if she is sharp and impatient, if she uses threats which she never carries out, she is certainly stamping the plastic material which is in her arms with marks which may possibly be indelible. If she can give her child from the first a tranquil face, a soft voice, a firm self-control, a patience never invaded by temper, wise rebukes, and encouragements that are due, if she is always absolutely truthful to her own child, not promising what she will not give nor threatening what she will not perform, she is in the early weeks or months of the little life laying the sure foundations of a noble character.

Express teaching is most important, but this constant influence of the mature personality on the germinal life which has come into being is possibly even more important. Quite early a child can co-operate in what it is taught, can learn or refuse to learn: but it has no say in those first influences when it is most impressionable; it is made or marred by others. Much that was once put down to heredity is now recognised as the result of those first influences. A mother makes her child in the most remarkable way, makes or mars.

It is supremely important that she should be genuinely Christian; and if she is Christian she should realise this function of hers as the first that Christ requires of her, the function of moulding the little life that she has been privileged to bear by all the gracious and beautiful influences that she can exert over it.

A Christian father will not be behind the mother in his share of the task, though her part precedes his, and in some ways his chief duty is not to interfere with or to undo what the mother has done.

The influence of outside circumstances and psychic forces on children at birth received a painful illustration in the war of 1914–18; it was found that the children born during that period were restless and nervy and unmanageable. It is a strong argument against war; but it reminds parents of the duty which has been but imperfectly recognised hitherto in the world's history: they have to usher their children into life in an atmosphere of truth and justice and self-restraint; it is not enough to have spasms and sallies of love, interspersed with outbreaks of temper and periods of indifference. The atmosphere must be kept always serene, and a steady pressure of goodness and rightness must be maintained. For children are largely made before they can begin to take part in their making.

On education I do not venture to speak. Dr. Maxwell Garnett has written as an expert a book which marks a new era in the science and art of education. As the teaching of this great book permeates the community, we shall effect reforms in our schools and colleges which may completely transform the future life of our planet. But Christ's law

of the sacredness of child life runs right through the process of education from the nursery and the kindergarten to the last days at college. In an ever-increasing degree the scholar shares in the work of his education, until when college is left behind, at the age of twenty-three or so, he is completely his own teacher.

In the earlier stages, however, the influences are still in the hands of teachers, and must be watched, controlled or corrected by parents. There may be great differences of opinion about what is to be taught, and possibly up to the age of adolescence it does not much matter what subjects are chosen, the discipline of learning being more important in those early years than what is learnt. But for Christians there can be no difference of opinion as to the ideal which should be steadily set before the children, illustrated by all that is taught, impressed by all that is done in the schoolroom and in the playground.

The stumbling-block which we put, consciously or unconsciously, in the way of the little ones, destroying their lives and frustrating our best desires for them, is, that we either spur them on to make their lives a struggle for their own advancement, or leave them to treat their lives as an opportunity for their own enjoyment. We do not teach them expressly these objects: the world teaches them; a thousand currents of influence creep in upon them and engage them to a service of self-ambition or of self-indulgence. Unless, therefore, we actively and consistently counteract these allurements or goads by offering a greater allurement or presenting a sharper goad, children will inevitably drift into the corrupted currents of the world. The solemn baptismal vows and prayers for their deliverance from the world, the flesh and the devil—will not suffice, never have sufficed, unless the stronger motive is brought to bear, unless the true ideal is constantly and consistently presented to them and illustrated by example. A child cannot at first understand the great commandment: Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Parents therefore have to explain it to their children, first by obeying it themselves, and then by showing to them how it works in their particular circumstances of childhood, adolescence and youth.

"You are here on the King's business: you have to serve, to be part of His great order: you are like a planet in its orbit, moving by God's will; you are like the plants and all God's creatures, fulfilling His purpose.

"You may not please yourself, you may not seek your own good: the only good you may get for yourself is that which comes unsought when you are serving the rest.

"Even Christ pleased not Himself: even Christ was amongst us as one that serves. You are His child, His servant, His messenger. The way the Master went, shall not the servant tread it still? Would you be better off than He?

"Life from first to last is the opportunity of helping and blessing the rest; it is your chance of learning love, what love is, whence it came, how it is to be practised. God is Love; you will find no good in life except in this."

If this truth were constantly instilled into the minds of all children, and illustrated in the practice of all parents, tutors and governors, the whole of our society would be surely transformed. Greed and self-seeking would surely become revolting to all from childhood upwards. Love and service would be the impelling motives of all human life. To teach this to the children is to save them and to make them a blessing: to withhold it from them, and to leave them to be ruled by the natural, or rather diabolical, motives of greed and self, is to put a stumbling-block in their way, to so imperil their life *here*, that we say nothing of the life hereafter.

With adolescence childhood ceases, and those who have had charge of the children must relax their hold. But before they launch the boys and girls on the ocean, they can impress them with certain ideas and principles which will stand them in good stead during the voyage. They can, for example, seek to win them to a personal choice, a decision for Christ, before the crucial age of sixteen. Do we sufficiently consider—do we remember our own youth? —how at that age in a boy, and at even an earlier age in a girl, there is a natural development in the body and in the mind which makes it comparatively easy to seek and to accept the gift of God to the world? Just at that point

the boy may be induced to take Christ on board, as the pilot of the barque. In the beautiful office of Confirmation this truth is recognised. But parents and teachers are more inwardly efficient than pastors and masters at that critical period. Here every Christian who has had any charge of children should labour to bring them to the point, should even travail in birth again until Christ be formed in them.

And not only so, but there are definite counsels and warnings which should be given to these young voyagers. Let them be told by holy and loving lips the mystery of their own bodies, the miracle of birth and parenthood. Let them be warned against the misuse of their own bodies and the dangerous indulgence in contaminating conversation and literature. The moral wrecks which strew the strand in our modern life are to be traced principally to the neglect of parents and guardians, who have launched the young upon the sea without chart or compass, without any warning of the shoals and rocks and quicksands.

There is a scare in our day, which may relax our efforts to obey Christ's command about the children. The neo-Malthusians are trying to limit the births, for fear that the growth of population should pass the means of subsistence. Our own people in this island, they say, have doubled within sixty years. Whereunto is this to grow? We may produce a vast proletariate in which, as under a locust swarm, all the fruits of our civilisation will be trodden down or consumed. In this godless terror parents are called on to limit the births, and any means which effect the desirable end of preventing or curtailing human life may be employed. These neo-Malthusians have not looked much into the face of Christ, nor understood His words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me; of such is the kingdom of heaven." But the remedy for the evil which they dread lies entirely in obedience to His laws, and in the faith that He can and will control births, seeing He lighteth every man coming into the world.

The remedy is to maintain and even raise the standard of nurture and education. The growth of population which threatens the welfare of society is always among those

classes which have no standard of nurture and education. They breed like the lower animals. But there never is, nor can there ever be, over-production of human life which is truly and nobly developed, taught the higher standards of morality, filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

The spawn of the slums, the gross and abominable production of lives outside the marriage relation, the recklessness of the lower breeds, are evils to be met, not by inducing the nobler sort of men to leave procreation to the baser sort, but by bringing the baser sort to the standard of the higher.

A child is a sacred thing: its angel always beholds the face of the Father in heaven; those who bring it into the world are responsible for bringing it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; all therefore that is known of training in health and godliness, in soundness of mind and body, must be brought to bear on this God-given and angel-guarded creation of the Divine Love. If Christ's view of the sanctity of child life were adopted, there would be no fear of over-population.

Thus Christ's view of the child is at once revolutionary and redemptive. We are only now, in these latter days, beginning to grasp its significance.

But Watts in his prophetic way saw this, and tried to bring it home to his generation, as also he tried to bring home the other teaching of Christ, when he painted his "Spirit of Christianity" and dedicated it to "all the Churches." For there the spirit of Christianity is a majestic form—whether male or female you cannot tell—clad in a crimson robe with many folds and seated on the clouds of heaven. One hand is as it were on the heart, and the other is reached out for succour and protection. And sheltered in the folds of the robe are the children, beautiful god-like children, trustful, secure and happy.

It is dangerous perhaps to define what a seer and artist like Watts actually meant by a picture. But certainly the suggestion is that Christianity (in contrast with paganism, or Mohammedanism, or any other religion known to man) is above all things the care of the children, a vast pity for their helplessness, a belief in their possibilities, a

responsibility for guarding, shielding, training, developing and loving them.

On this showing it is Christ as a babe in the manger, Christ bidding the children come unto Him, as much as Christ reaching wide arms out to us from the Cross, that makes the new religion, which is yet, in its later developments, to save the world.

CHAPTER XX

CHRIST AND HEALTH

JESUS came into this sick world as Health. He was Himself perfectly healthy. We have no hint that He was ever ill or suffered physical pain—until they crucified Him. It was said in the words of the prophet that He bore our diseases ; but that was only in the sense that He bore our sins ; He did not suffer the diseases nor did He commit the sins ; He took both upon Himself, that He might heal our diseases and take away our sins. Coming into a world, Himself so healthy, that was full of diseases, He began by an instinct to heal. Immediately all that were afflicted with any complaint or defect gathered round Him, and He spent the greater part of His early ministry in doing a physician's work. We see no limit to His healing power ; chronic disablement, blindness, insanity, yielded to His treatment. On three occasions He even called back to life those who had just died.

This ministry of healing was not incidental, it was no diversion from His mission. It was His mission, the seal of it, the substance of it. This was the evidence that the Kingdom of God was actually there, had come in His person, to establish itself and to widen its sway among men : that disease fled before Him, that nothing was incurable. In His own graphic language He said that anyone afflicted by disease was bound by Satan ; the insane He treated as possessed with evil spirits. The diseases and insanities were all from His point of view unnatural. Expressing the will and purpose of God, He set about the task of healing them.

When He gathered disciples and sent them out to preach the gospel of the Kingdom, He told them to heal

disease. He prescribed a symbolic unction of oil, to give to their healing work a visible expression. But they were empowered to heal and to restore the sufferers in body and mind. And after one of their excursions they returned marvelling that these evil powers were subject to them in His name. This healing through unction was practised in the early Church, as the Epistle of St. James shows; and it continued, nay one may say it continues to this day; though with that incredible power which the Church seems to have of nullifying and reversing the ordinances of her Lord, this unction which was for healing is reserved for use when healing is no longer possible. A sacrament is made out of a practice which stultifies the merciful intention of Christ.

Thus for those who would be Christlike, for those who would divine and practise His commandments, there is a threefold obligation, which unhappily for the world has, until quite recent times, been very largely disregarded.

There is the obligation to be in health by faith, to heal by faith, and by works to strive always for conditions which may as far as possible secure health for all. Christ was in the world as Health; as He was, so are we in this world.

If we will obey Him and believe in Him, we shall in all ways and at all times be striving against the diseases and insanities which afflict mankind and be using all the powers that He puts at our disposal to maintain or to recover health for ourselves and for others, health of body and health of mind, that we may, according to that early Christian letter," prosper and be in health even as our soul prospereth." [1]

In the first place, then, it is our business through Christ to be in health. A sick body easily produces a sick mind, and from a sick mind may come moral perversion, and even spiritual death. There is accordingly in Christ a power, let us call it frankly miraculous, to make us and to keep us in health. A true spiritual life leads to moral sanity, and a healthy mind does much to make a healthy body. Let the heart rest in Christ, let the inner nature be united with Christ, so that, according to His striking figure, we assimilate

[1] 3 John v. 2.

Him, eating His flesh and drinking His blood, and there is a spring of health at the centre, which will ward off diseases by keeping mind and body in wholesome activity. Health results from keeping the laws of Nature, but it is restored and maintained in the insanitary conditions of this present world by the grace of Christ, received through faith.

And yet we should always recognise in our own case that the Heavenly Father, Who chastens His children in love, may for His high ends permit disease to come to us. He may give Satan permission to afflict us as he afflicted God's servant Job, because in that discipline lies a higher good than could be reached by health. It is necessary, therefore, to hold in our thought two aspects of the position, which seem, though only *seem*, to be irreconcilable. We have by faith in Christ to seek health and to keep well; and yet when illness of any kind comes in spite of our faith, we have to bear it with fortitude, and, strong in the confidence that our Father never lightly afflicts, we have to extract from our suffering a spiritual good. Our Lord's own Cross is the warning against the error that all disease and suffering are evil. Often has He, for us as for Himself—

> Grafted on life's bitter stem
> Buds that draw sweetness from the sap of pain.

This is the true mark of a Christian, that he is *in utramque partem paratus*: by faith he resists and overcomes disease; but when disease cannot be resisted he receives it in faith, and turns it to spiritual gain.

He recognises a sacred obligation to the body which is the instrument of his activity and therefore of God's service in the world. He respects it as the temple of the Holy Ghost, and strives systematically to keep it efficient, by cleanliness, by proper rest and exercise, by temperance in food and drink, and by the due mental activity which is required for physical health. If he fasts in imitation of Christ, he takes care that the fast shall not impair his powers, as it did not impair Christ's powers. Those abnormal flagellations and mortifications in which mediæval piety

delighted, are set aside as an injury to the temple of God and a dangerous tampering with the powers which are required in God's service.

The fasts and mortifications and lacerations of hermits and monks appear very dubious to those who have looked into the perfect law of liberty, and at the same time have studied the human body and mind in the light of physiology and psychology.

The true fast and the pious *askesis*, we now see, is to receive and to make to one's self constant suggestion of Christ's health, of Christ's purity, of Christ's habitual beneficence and warfare against evil things and powers. To go without food is not a fast which prophets or apostles recommend; to abstain from the leaven of the pharisees, to refuse the poisoned cup of pleasure, to exercise oneself in prayer and active ministry to others, and to be content with the simplest food and the meagrest comforts, in order to serve others better—this is the fast, this is the asceticism, which Christ demands.

But in the second place a strangely neglected part of Christian obligation comes into view to-day, viz. the work of healing others by faith in Christ. The reason why this part of the gospel has fallen into abeyance is, that when Christianity produced and advanced medical science, it gradually effected a separation between the healing and the teaching arts, which in the gospel, as in Christ, were closely bound together. The Church left the medical work to the physician, and confined itself to the healing of souls. But soul and body cannot be thus divided. The doctor who ignores the soul fails, just as the Christian minister fails who ignores the body. The functions should co-operate, and even intertwine. There is the normal healing which may be achieved by medical skill; but there is a supernormal healing which is effected by faith and prayer. The minister should help the doctor even in the normal work, and should supplement the normal work when it has reached the limit. The doctor, on his part, would be wise to help the minister, and indeed to bring into his practice those spiritual powers of faith and prayer which can be more effectual in many cases than his art itself.

The work of the doctor should be Christian science, and the work of the minister should be to encourage that Christian science, and to use in faith and prayer those spiritual powers in Christ Jesus which, ever since the days of His flesh, have worked for the healing of disease and the amelioration of human suffering.

It is one of the encouraging signs of our day that the separation between the healing and the spiritual ministries is closing up. The Church begins to see again clearly, and to receive from her Lord afresh, the commission to heal. There are healers attaining an enormous repute by using exactly the methods which Christ Himself used, with astonishing success. And Christian ministers again are recognising that they have, in their ordinary ministry, a part to play in restoring the sick, not by discrediting the doctor, but by believing in him and praying for him—as well as by maintaining the beneficent institutions of hospitals and dispensaries.

But this is not a function of the ministry only. Everyone who believes in Christ and makes faith a daily practice may be, and ought to be, a minister of health in the ordinary ways of life, and an agent of healing in the extraordinary attacks of disease and accident and decline which are of constant occurrence among men.

We have or may have three remedial and hygienic faculties which we can exercise daily among all whom we meet. There is the power of sympathy and cheerfulness. There is the power of suggestion, always known, but now as it were scientifically demonstrated. And there is the power of prayer, always practised, often doubted and even derided, but now becoming increasingly recognised as one of the constant forces at work in this God's world which we inhabit.

The power of cheerfulness is a health producer. Doctors achieve their success almost as much by a bright and hopeful temperament as by their medicines. In the first onset of a disease, a word of encouragement and hope, an atmosphere of joy and peace, a strong sympathy, may furnish just the needed power of resistance. Joy is a medicine; they, therefore, who bring joy with them are healers. Many

diseases are only sick fancies, nervous fears, imaginary, but to the imagination terribly real.

These may be often swept away by gladness, as the mists of the morning are dispersed by the sun. To a real Christian Christ's gift is given of "rising with healing in His wings."

But this power of joy and encouragement becomes even more directly efficacious when we realise what is done, and what can be done, by suggestion. It is known how a disease may be induced by suggesting to anyone that he has got it. A prisoner was told that he was sleeping in a bed in which another had died of smallpox; it was not true, but the prisoner developed smallpox from the suggestion. It is proved to be a fact that if a succession of people remark to you: "How ill you look!" presently, you do look ill and become ill. What an effect this established truth may have upon our conduct and influence! We may suggest good, we may suggest health to all whom we meet, setting at work in them those unconscious forces which work for the healing of disease and the efficiency of all the faculties. Our greetings and good-byes (which are "God be with ye"), our comments, our narratives, our proposals, our fancies, may work on others with a sanative and curative effect. There are a great number of healers at work in society, and deriving a large income from their work, which doubtless they deserve. But we all, as believers in Christ, may work in this way without fee or reward. This healing is not a craft, learnt by study; it is a charisma conferred by grace. It is not Christian science, but Christian faith, which heals and sustains health.

And there is the power of prayer. "The prayer of faith shall heal the sick." That was taught in the early days of Christiantiy, and has been demonstrated all along. It is demonstrated afresh to-day, whenever we have the courage to offer the prayer *of faith.* Unfortunately we have so schooled ourselves to think that disease is a matter for the doctor, and when sickness comes it must be handed over to professional skill, that we do not use the prayer of faith. But every Christian should accustom himself to wield this permitted power. It is not to discredit medicine or to

dispense with the doctor—far from it ; but it is to recognise that God can and will heal in the name, i.e. the Person of Jesus ; it is to see the doctor and medicine as His agents, but to rely wholly on Him, it is to remember constantly that beyond the margin of medical and surgical skill is the ocean of the Divine power and pity and healing.

In my earlier days I was led by two concrete experiences to see this truth of the prayer of faith. One morning I was in my study, and happened to be engaged on the Book of Kings and the passage which tells of Hezekiah's recovery from sickness, when I was summoned to the sick-room of a man just over the way. I met the doctor in the doorway, who told me that he could do no more. I went up, and found the man in terrible distress from bronchitis. I told him what I had just been studying and asked him if we should pray for his recovery. He signified assent. I knelt and prayed that the Good Physician would raise him up. The remarkable fact was that the man recovered, and lived, like Hezekiah, just fifteen years more. Of course, I knew that where the doctor could do no more I could do nothing. But I had just vividly realised the power of God to heal, and was able, therefore, to offer the prayer *of faith.*

The other instance was similar, but even more remarkable. Again I was summoned suddenly to a house a few yards away, where the daughter was ill and, as was thought, dying. When I entered the room I saw her, but did not know her. It was acute peritonitis ; colour and form were changed, and she was unconscious. What could I do or say ? I asked the mother to pray with me. We knelt down and asked for that young life. There came to me a conviction that it was the Father's will to give it back for a time. The improvement began that day, and I saw her about fresh and glad and serviceable as before.

But we have to remember in exercising this ministry of healing that the power is entirely of God, and is exercised according to His discretion. How careful even Jesus was to show that the healing, the feeding, the resurrection of the dead, everything out of the common order, was the work of His Father, done in answer to prayer. " I know

that Thou hearest me always " was His preface to summoning Lazarus from the tomb. The great danger is that we may begin to think of ourselves as healers, to claim a power, and to use it as if it were our own. Such pretensions are always put to shame. The power is of God; it is not vested in any individual; only God can use a willing mind and heart as the instrument through which He works. And therefore, while the prayer of faith may raise the sick, it may fail to do so. Those two whom I mentioned were raised up, and so have many others been; but again and again the healing has not been given, and I have been reminded how far it is from the purpose of God to put it into the absolute power of anyone to save his brother's soul from death.

It is this element of uncertainty, this inclusion of the clause, " if it be Thy will," that so often weakens the prayer of faith, prevents it being effectually offered, and therefore limits the Divine purpose. At the same time, when the prayer is really offered in faith and not answered, with the result that the disappointed and baffled servant of God is, like Jonah, discouraged and displeased, there is an evidence that there is something wrong with the prayer.

The power of healing by faith in the name of Christ has to be sought and cultivated in absolute humility. There must be no self-seeking in it, no arrogance in claiming or exercising it; no pretence that it is for one's own merit or by virtue of one's own faculty that healing comes. It must, on the contrary, be only a supreme trust in God, a belief that it is His will to heal and to bless and to save, a confidence that His power is exerted through Christ, whenever faith is simple and prayer is sincere. If any is sick, let him send for the elders of the Church, let them anoint him and pray over him. The one all-essential thing is to recognise God, to accept His holy will, to appeal to His mercy and to rely on His power.

Whoever can attain and keep this attitude of mind is permitted to be a healer, becomes a healer; often unknown and unrecognised by men, he has yet received by the Spirit the charisma of healing (vide 1 Cor. xii. 9).

But Christ's command of health seems to demand in

these days something more than the occasional healing of disease. It becomes a call to every physician and man of science to work for the extinction of diseases—tuberculosis, cancer, influenza. It becomes a call for every minister of Christ and every public servant to see that the houses are sanitary, that the laws are amended and executed, as fresh means of combating disease are discovered. It becomes a call to every citizen to interest himself and herself in the condition of the people, in town administration and town planning.

The great doctor working and suffering to find the cause of a disease and to remove it is surely one of the heroic figures of the Christian world. He is an apostle of the Gentiles. He walks in the footprints of the Master. He may well say to those who merely preach the gospel and profess a faith in Christ: "I for my part will show my faith by my works, and leave you to judge whether you without works can show *your* faith." When Sir Ronald Ross discovered the cause of malaria, he broke into a pæan of exultation, which has in it the ring of the Christian faith. Whether it is poetry or not, it is the celebration of a *poesis* or making, which must sound welcome in the ears of God:—

This day relenting God
Hath placed within my hand
A wondrous thing; and God
Be praised! At His command

Seeking His sacred deeds
With tears and toiling breath,
I find thy cunning seeds,
O million-murdering Death.

I know this little thing
A myriad men will save;
O death, where is thy sting,
Thy victory, O grave?

But the cause of disease and death is often a germ of a different kind. It is in the greed of interested persons who make and possess insanitary dwellings. It is in the apathy of official persons who neglect the regulations made

for the preservation of health. It is in the incredible indifference and carelessness of the public. A vast proportion of our people are unconcerned about the condition of other houses if only their own are healthy. They leave the care of the whole community, from sheer laziness and apathy, to the officials, forgetting that it is expecting too much of officials that they should act vigorously and efficiently when those who seem to appoint them seem not to care.

The Christian, i.e. man or woman, who is scrupulously listening to and obeying the laws of Christ will, in this modern world, in this time to which we have come, argue in this way: We are a democracy; the condition of the people is the concern of the people; the health and well-being of the people are not to be entrusted to a Government, to officers of health, to sanitary inspectors; these are all appointed by the people, as the servants of the people; but the people must see to it that they fulfill their functions, and do not shirk them. And who are the people, who are charged with this responsibility? I myself am. Who is bound to see to this if I do not? Why should the rest concern themselves with the matter if I do not? Whom will God hold responsible if not me? My neighbour across the way? But why? This is democracy: each counts for one, and no one for more than one. What is everybody's duty is therefore my duty. The Christian, therefore, will be a purifying and health-making influence in the community. He will, if possible, be on public bodies, or he will join voluntary societies for securing the health and well-being of children and adults, of adolescents and aged, of poor as well as rich.

How can this person be a Christian, or in any sense suggest Christlikeness, who is entirely absorbed in his own business, his own profit, his own well-being, whether physical or spiritual? How can this be a Christian whose one interest is to calculate when Christ will return, to the total neglect of all the wrongs, abuses and tyrannies which crush or poison the lives of His children here and now?

The Christian must be the most vigorous of reformers, like the Master Himself, not without a lash of small cords

with which to drive out what defiles His Temple. He does not only subscribe to hospitals and support district nurses, but he searches out the germs of greed, and selfishness, and laziness, and dishonesty, which are in the community to which be belongs " a million-murdering death."

Jesus came into the sick world as Health. All his true followers are now in the world as health ; the test of the following is in the results which appear, the triumph of medical knowledge and skill, the elimination of one scourge of humanity after another, the growing efficiency of national and local government, in preventing and isolating and curing disease, and in providing wholesome homes and villages and towns and cities for Christ's kinsfolk to dwell in.

CHAPTER XXI

CHRIST AND PEACE

On the eve of the eighth anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War of 1914 the then British Premier delivered a notable summons to the Free Churches to undertake the prevention of war in the future. He showed very clearly how dangerous to civilisation a repetition of a world-war would be. From his own experience in prosecuting the war against Germany he drew the most alarming inferences about the deadly destructiveness of future wars. "Keep your eye on what is happening. They are constructing more terrible machines than even the late war ever saw. . . . They are to attack cities unarmed, where you have defenceless populations, to kill, to maim, to poison, to mutilate, to burn helpless women and children. If the Churches of Christ throughout Europe and America allow that to fructify, they had better close their doors." In the League of Nations lay the only hope of saving civilisation; and the only hope of making the League of Nations effectual lay in the Churches creating a strong enough opinion to support it. He referred to the suddenness and unexpectedness with which a world-war breaks out when all the nations have been arming, competitively arming. "It comes with a suddenness which is appalling, perfectly appalling. It is too late then to work an elaborate machine. The war germ is just like any other germ—you really do not know it has got you until you are stricken down." The only thing is to be forearmed against this deadly germ: the only power that can forearm us is the Church. He closed with a notable self-dedication:

"I have had some experience of war. What I saw of it filled me with horror. What I saw of it day by day makes me vow that I will consecrate what is left of my

energies to make it impossible that humanity shall in future have to pass through the fire, the torment, the cruelty, the horror, and the squalor of war."

It was a notable utterance, because no one saw the thing so completely, no one played so great a part in it, no one had such opportunities of estimating the long-drawn-out agony of the years that immediately followed the war, as Mr. Lloyd George.

This, then, becomes with increasing clearness the present task of the Christian Church, to make the world safe for—Peace. If the Church does not accept this task, it is doomed; it must hand over its high commission to some other religion, or even to some non-religious body, that will undertake the task. Humanity is not going to commit suicide; and suicide it certainly will be if the best brains are devoted to discovering the most destructive agents, implements, poisons; if the world's wealth is to be used in preparing these instruments of destruction and in arming the populations with them, and if it is to be left to any ambitious nation to run amok, as Germany did in the years between 1870 and 1914, and then at its own time, and in its own supposed interest, to throw the match into the vast powder magazine.

Clearly *some* power is going to prevent this, some intelligence, some movement, some discovery of the methods of mutual consultation and co-operation of law—not national, but international—of police maintaining the peace, in place of armaments that imperil it.

Some power will do it, whether scientific or political or moral. There must in some way be a great International, the combination of the peoples who are now led like sheep to the slaughter by their rulers, their publicists and their traders, united in fixed and settled determination that in this diabolical game of war they will have no part. Deliverance must come: the universal suicide must somehow be averted.

But the power that ought to do it is Christianity: the servants of Christ should be the leaders, and the rank and file, of the great marshalled host of humanity that will declare against war, and bring that military business, now

under modern conditions become intolerable to the human race, to its quietus and obsolescence.

The Great War of 1914–18 has indeed saved the world from war. It was a great price to pay. How nobly and heroically those boys paid it! Their monuments arise in every town and village, as the pledge that what they paid for shall be gained. Until this great, mad, futile, aimless, objectless, war occurred; until science revealed its altogether unimagined possibilities of destruction; until the peace revealed the misery, destitution, dislocation and despair which so vast a disturbance leaves behind it, the Church, as a whole, was in some hesitation about its attitude to war. But this war has ended that hesitation. That Christ is wholly, absolutely and irreversibly against the thing called war, as shown in the Flanders battles, in the submarine sinkings, in the air-raids and blind, senseless destruction of innocent lives, no person who in any way knows Christ can now for a moment doubt. Until this decisive event came and settled the matter there was some room for difference of opinion. Jesus had not declared against war, just as He had not declared against slavery; He had freely used illustrations from armies and conflict; He had implied that even at the end of the world there should be wars and rumours of wars; once He had spoken, metaphorically no doubt, of the time having come for providing weapons even at the cost of garments. While therefore war was in any sense tolerable, or could offer some aspects of nobility, or could show some useful results, it is no wonder that the Church gave it a quasi-sanction. Knights contending chivalrously for the weak and the oppressed; armies moving to Palestine to release the Holy Sepulchre from the Infidel; a Garibaldi fighting for the freedom and unity of Italy; nay, even American citizens fighting, ostensibly to maintain the Union and actually to free the slave—these might come, one thought, under the permission, if not the benediction, of Christ. And while men faced each other manfully, and at comparatively short distance maintained an equal conflict by individual valour and trained co-operation in action, the thing still seemed human; the lives lost were lost nobly and honour-

ably, and those who survived were covered with glory. Therefore the flags were hung in the churches, and the names of those who fell were kept on the walls in everlasting remembrance. Up to a certain time and point warfare had a dignity, a manliness, a chivalry about it, which might easily mislead even the elect and prevent the Church from asking seriously what must be the mind of Christ on the matter. He was, no doubt, the Prince of Peace, not in the sense that He was going to secure it, but only in the sense that He would approve it when it came. The fact that none of His recorded utterances condemned war as it was then known, any more than any utterance condemned slavery as it was then practised, was bewildering, and led to the hesitation, which survived even to 1914.

But just as 1862 settled the question for all Christians that Christ was against slavery, 1914–18 settled the question for all Christians that He is against war. Palpably, overwhelmingly, He is against this thing which is now called War, the application of science to destroy at sight; to poison; to sink; to bombard from the air; the warring not against armies and fortresses, but against helpless populations and open towns; the sinking not of battleships, but of any ships. This is all unblushing and inexcusable murder, assassination, heartless cruelty. All the glamour of war is gone; chivalry is no more. It is not even brutal (no wild beasts do these things), it is devilish. One is bound to suppose an order of beings, non-human, just what was implied by the Devil and his angels, to account for the daily events of war as it now is, and will be. There was a murderer from the beginning; in modern war he has enlisted governors, men of science, able editors, and all the greedy tribe that, to get money, will sacrifice men, and by a strong spirit of delusion he has made them into a world-camorra, to assassinate, to murder.

We are, therefore, in no doubt since the last war that Christ is against war. He was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil; and this is the work of the Devil, if anything ever was. The whole tissue of lies and delusions, secret diplomacy, espionage, underground preparations; the specious pretences, the bombastic pretence of noble

aims covering the basest designs; this is the masterpiece of the Adversary of Men, who was a murderer from the beginning.

And Christ was manifested to defeat this adversary and to destroy his works. We now look back with profound reverence on those early Christians, like Tertullian, who recognised at once the incompatibility of fighting with the Christian faith. Though Constantine's fatal gift of his protection undid the Church, and he professed to win his victories by the Cross and by Christian legions, Christianity in its earlier days understood the mind of Christ, and anticipated the conclusion, which we at last, after such miseries and sorrows, such exasperation of the war spirit and of war methods, are now beginning to reach.

But Christ's commandment of love takes a form which results from the development of the world's life. He does not bid us refuse military service on personal grounds, or for personal ends, when the country is involved in war: that is only an occasional command which would come perhaps once in a lifetime, or even not at all. But He bids us toil always, with brain and heart, with gifts and service, as citizens, as voters, as politicians, to make war not only unnecessary but impossible. And to achieve this end, our Christian faith requires us to do to-day what ought to have been done long ago; but to do it now, because the horrible experience and revelations of the Great War have opened our eyes and forced upon us the truth. It is a living Christ Who stands before us now as Prince of Peace, and, pointing to the dread years 1914–18, bids us on His authority and by His powers prevent any such thing from happening again.

Mr. Edison has gravely announced that a new poison gas, called by the barbarous name Lewisite, is of such potency that, released over London by twenty or thirty aeroplanes, it would asphyxiate the whole population in three or four hours. It is the belief of this great inventor that war will ultimately be brought to an end by a discovery of a method of destruction so complete that the world in terror will ban the whole thought of war. And yet he believes that many terrible wars will still occur before the world learns wisdom.

But why should not the law of Christ, and the love of God and man, accomplish the desired end more effectually and more lastingly than this ghastly terror? Are men incapable of being moved by love? Is the only method with them to open the jaws of Hell and threaten them with the eternal flames? The law of Christ is our one security: obedience to the Prince of Peace alone offers to our unhappy race escape from that appalling doom.

Our one hope now lies in bringing all the civilised Governments of the world into an effective union for the arrangement of international differences and for consultation on what is the common good of humanity. This island of ours was once a heptarchy, with Scotland and Wales separate and generally hostile. It is now one, and war between its parts is impossible. And not only so; it has become the centre of a similar consolidation of nations and peoples, which comprises nearly a quarter of mankind. We have to find the way of bringing the other three-quarters of mankind into a similar harmony and mutual understanding, which should preclude war by settling all questions on agreed principles of law, supported by a common force of police.

This is the one goal to be sought now, the one method that offers any real prospect of bringing war to an end by the universal consent of the race. It is not doubtful that if this way can be found, but only if this way can be found, our civilisation will be saved.

The League of Nations has come into being because the clearest heads among us have realised this simple proposition. If Christ's hand and spirit can be traced anywhere in the world to-day, it is in this gradually growing recognition of the one way in which war can be prevented. And if we would estimate the power of antichrist in the world to-day, we have to mark the desperate militarist factions in all countries which try to discredit this one way of peace, and the incredible apathy of most populations, including our own, in every effort that is made to support and to promote the League, which is making the first tentative steps, like the tottering of an infant that is expected to carry a load before it has well learnt to walk.

In an important English town of 100,000 inhabitants, I was told that it was impossible to arouse any interest in the League of Nations. Two or three hundred would join the Union which is seeking to support it. Two or three Churches had collectively allied themselves with the Union : but for the rest, the people would not attend meetings on the subject or betray any interest whatever. The town, one hopes, is exceptional. But those who are advocating the League and seeking to win that popular support and enthusiasm without which, as the Prime Minister said, the great movement cannot succeed, are only too conscious that they are working in an inert and apathetic mass. The one hope is in Christ, and in the obedience of those who admit allegiance to Him. All who profess and call themselves Christians must labour in all ways open to them, to secure that which is the one hope of making war impossible.

There are, no doubt, arguments of some validity against the League of Nations which came into being by the Treaty of Versailles. All allowance should be made for these arguments. America held aloof because the League seemed too much a union of the Allies in the Great War, to bring the world into line with them for the repression of the defeated Powers. It may be objected to the League that it will be only a defensive league against those defeated Powers, which, in due time recovering, will unite against it as a preventive measure ; and thus there will be a new balance of power, or an unbalance of power, which will result in another and a more terrible struggle between the opposing combinations.

But these arguments which are used to excuse certain Powers from entering the League, and the populations from giving any more than a very tepid assent, are not decisive. On the contrary, the very doubts they suggest are a call for a more earnest effort to strengthen and complete the League, which is, as just hinted, only in its infancy, and requires the fostering care of all the nations to rear it to a virile maturity.

The achievements of the infant League have been not inconsiderable, in settling differences which might easily have led to war, in establishing the tribunal which may

settle future disputes, in promoting an agreed reduction of armaments, as well as in combating typhus and arranging for international labour agreements. These achievements are only a beginning, but they are a clear promise of what the League will do, when all the nations have come into it, when it has the moral support of the world and can count on the assistance and resources of all mankind to carry out its beneficent designs.

The effort *must* succeed, because the alternative is too appalling to face. The effort *must* succeed, because prophets and righteous men have foretold it and Christ came to accomplish it.

For what, *au fond,* is the cause of the opposition and indifference to this great and noble effort to save the world from war, apart from the military and commercial interests which depend for their existence or for their success on the prospective wars which are naturally anticipated? The root cause is a profound pessimism about human nature. What man has been he will always be. He always was a fighting animal. From the beginning of recorded history he has been fighting. Warlike achievements are his admiration and ambition; especially are they the admiration and desire of women. We must therefore face the certainty that even when war has become so destructive, so disastrous, so appalling, so diabolical; even when it is shown that *no* good whatever is achieved by it, but only evil, multiplied, varied evil, at the time and for long after, men will wish to fight, will glory in fighting, and will look back with pride and satisfaction, those who survive, on their successes and achievements in that line. "It was a famous victory" will be the refrain for ever.

This pessimism about human nature is intelligible enough for those who have nothing but human nature to go by. But we, as Christians, have a divine human nature to go by, a regenerative and transforming power to apply to human nature, a Christ to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth.

We are not therefore entitled to indulge in this pessimism. Human nature as such, we may admit, is, as you say, combative, cruel, delighting in blood and slaughter. Human

nature is trivial and superficial, we cannot but own. Men will be excited above measure in a fight of any kind, even a boxing match, if more sanguinary combats are precluded; they will respond to the call to arms when they are deaf to all the higher calls of virtue or religion. Human nature is a poor, transitory thing—men are little better than ephemeral insects which want to spread their wings in the sun and sip the flowers before with the evening they pass away.

But what does Christ mean? He is human nature on a higher and a divine plane. His purpose in the world is to raise men to His own plane. Pessimism about human nature passes into optimism when He is recognised and His work and purpose are accepted as the guide and hope of human life. It is the redeemed and regenerate human nature, made possible in Christ, that gives hope for the future, because it transcends those traits of the ape and the tiger which man seems to have inherited from a lower ancestry. The fighting spirit in man is by Christ transformed: it no longer seeks or allows conflict and killing between men; it runs only into a good fight of faith against powers of evil, the world-rulers of this darkness, the spiritual foes which war against man as man. This transformed human nature, effected by Christ, aims at a Kingdom of God on earth, and contemplates with certainty a time when the nations will learn war no more. It believes passionately in a reign of mercy and justice and love. It is eager to use the boundless resources of the earth, discovered or as yet undiscovered, not to make poisons and instruments of death, that one nation may coerce and tyrannise over the rest, but to ameliorate the lot of man on the earth, to heal his diseases, to enrich and ennoble his life.

In the Great War, that transformed human nature, Christ in men, was submerged. Visible in isolated deeds of self-sacrifice and saving among all ranks of combatants, and as the White Christ seen now and again ministering to the wounded and the dying, Christ as the regenerate humanity that the world awaits was apparently beaten down and crushed in the mire of the trenches. He was crucified afresh. For those four years the Adversary seemed

to have defeated and abolished Him. But Christ is ever triumphant, and rises from His tomb. And to-day the transformed human nature is set on victory; Christ will beat down Satan under His feet. And all who are born again by faith in Him are called upon to make war impossible, by working for the close mutual understanding and co-operation of the nations, to realise a solidarity of humanity, a reign of moral law, the enthronement of Love as Lord on earth.

CHAPTER XXII

TALENTS

The most distinctive difference between the Ten Commandments and what we may call the Decalogue of Christ is, that the former are negative, the latter positive. The former prohibit us from doing evil; the latter bid us to do good.

Christ's word to man may be paraphrased in this way: Make the most of your life, do the best possible with it, do not be content with doing good, if you might do better; never rest even in the better, if there is a best. It is this positive call to duty, this sense of a great ideal to aim at, a never-fulfilled possibility luring us onward, this "rapture of the forward view," which has made Christ the leader of mankind, the inspiration to perpetual progress.

His commandment on this line is delivered and epitomised in the kindred parables of the pounds and of the talents. These parables present life to us as an opportunity. We are commissioned by an Invisible Lord to make the most of the opportunity. We have certain faculties entrusted to us, and we are to use them to the best advantage, that we may give a satisfactory account to the Invisible Lord. This is the only fruitful way of regarding life; no good ever did come or can come from any human existence, unless and until this element enters in. Life is a task, which must be performed under the great Taskmaster's eye. Men who recognise no taskmaster, men who think they can do as they please and will give account to no one, men who take life as the opportunity of self-indulgence, and use all their faculties to rob, abuse and triumph over their fellow-servants, make their lives a failure. No piled up riches, no empty honours or sounding names, can hide the reality

and tragedy of that failure. Life on those terms is bitter and disappointing in itself; God's judgment is passed on it in that bitterness, that cynicism, that disillusionment, in which such life ends. Human life is a success, it is worth all the toil and struggle involved in it, precisely in proportion as it presents itself as an enterprise, a task, an adventure, of which the primary significance is that it is appointed by God, and to God an account of it must be rendered. If children are not taught this they are cruelly ill-used by their parents and teachers, because it is the first and the main thing that they have to know. If, as life develops, this is ignored or forgotten or defied, the wreck of life is sure, however long delayed. But let anyone grasp and hold firmly to this one truth: "I am under the great Task-master's eye," and he will, though with much travail and toil, with many failures and disappointments, especially to himself, assuredly arrive. Yes, he will arrive, and unashamed, though as it were empty-handed, sobbing out, "I am an unprofitable servant"; for the Master is not a hard master, but infinitely merciful, and He reads the thoughts and intents of the heart. To Him failure lies only in not having tried, or in aiming too low.[1]

Your business, then, is to find as accurately and fully as you can what pounds or talents have been entrusted to you, whether few or many, and to be assured by a daring faith that some talent, however small, has been entrusted to you. As you recognise your talent (or talents), you shall diligently exercise and develop it, and put it out to usury, seeking to realise on it a compound interest. You shall be faithful, but not in a dogged and unenterprising way; rather you shall constantly consider: Is this the best that I can do? Might I not do better?

Probably the first question for everyone of us is, Have I the talents which would make me capable of teaching, helping, saving my fellow-men? That seems to be the attitude of Christ: "I will make you fishers of men."

The question may not be immediately answered, but it must be kept always in view. Could any tragedy be greater

[1] "Out of the loud-piping whirlwind, audibly to him that has ears, the Highest God is again announcing in these days: 'Idleness shall not be.' God has said it, man cannot gainsay."—CARLYLE, *Past and Present*, p. 242.

than that Simon Peter should have remained to the end of his days a mere fisherman on the lake, or that Paul should have done nothing else in life but make and mend tents ?

Yet in this modern society there are thousands of men earning money and heaping up riches and passing from the world, with next to no concern on the part of the world, who might, if they had only known, have been apostles, like Carey or Moffat, the chosen agents through whom the light breaks on dark continents and the scattered children of God are gathered home.

Always, then, the first question should be : Am I capable of the noblest service, the completest self-sacrifice ? Am I called to be an apostle ? If those five talents are in thy hand, use thy diligence to make them other five. The task of the ministry is much disdained in these days : the " best " men, it is said, will not look at it. It is left to the weak and the insignificant. Men of talent go on to be engineers, to make money, to enter the learned professions, to play golf, to shoot game, and be, as they suppose, gentlemen. But it should be considered that even the attempt to serve our fellows in the Kingdom of God, however poor may seem to be the result, is infinitely better than the attempt to serve and to please ourselves, however successful that may be. " A man," said Carlyle, " even professing, and never so languidly making some endeavour, to save the souls of men : contrast him with a man professing to do little but shoot the partridges of men." [1]

But if careful examination reveal the fact that for that highest service the talent is not given, let the next best be chosen and diligently pursued. Nay, the next best is the best, if faculty for that service to men and to God be not indubitably given. All service ranks the same with God. A craftsman may always, like Bezaleel, serve God, by the Spirit, in his craft. A politician may, with all seriousness, and under the sense of a call from Heaven, serve God in politics. It is a disastrous delusion current in some countries that politics and God's service do not agree. Remember Lincoln, or Cromwell.

[1] *Past and Present*, p. 208.

If your talent be wholly of the histrionic, the musical, the humorous order, you, as a Christian, should seek to serve God in the development of it, in the ennobling of it, and above all in keeping your own garments unspotted by the world. Discover your talent, make as sure of it as you can; try to see that there is nothing higher or better that *you* can do; and then employ it nobly, religiously, faithfully.

In the Church of Christ the talents received the name of "charismata": that name recognises that they are gifts of God, gifts of grace. But the freedom of the gift does not relieve us from the toil and the struggle to make full proof of it. For example, is your charisma a power to teach and to influence children? Such a charisma is sometimes graciously given to man or woman. Cultivate that gift. Learn all you can of the psychology of the child, of the best methods of teaching. Study patiently; prepare your lessons for your class as carefully as a preacher prepares for the pulpit. Stir up the gift that is in you.

Rare and precious charismata are bestowed on some, such as that of bringing in multitudes of souls. Spurgeon preached a sermon which was afterwards printed in letters of gold, because it was known to have brought three hundred persons to Christ. Probably most of his sermons brought in one or more. That marvellous charisma he used and developed to the end of his life, and long years after his death, through those sermons, the publication of which continued until all the MSS. were exhausted, "he being dead yet speaketh." Such a gift of God involves the owner of it in a great responsibility. When one with such a gift becomes the victim of his own success, seeks his own, lays up riches upon earth, turns to vainglory, self-indulgence and ultimate hypocrisy, the fall is terrible, because it is from such a height. But if such an one is faithful to the end, remains simple, humble, free from covetousness, pride, censoriousness and the irritable desire for recognition, great indeed must be his reward.

But there is a charisma of a much lowlier kind, and because it is so small it is much neglected. This is the one talent which is so often hidden in a napkin. It is the divine gift

of personal soul-winning. It should go along with the more resplendent gift of preaching, and with the settled work of teaching. But it may be found where those other gifts are wanting.

What is this gift? It is the power of drawing those with whom we live, those whom we know and with whom we have ordinary relations, into the charmed circle of Christ. It is a holy conversation; a deep and tender regard for the souls of others, and a belief that Christ wants them and will save them. That leads to a kind of witness, a true presentation of the gospel, which is never intrusive, never gives offence, but wins and draws with the cords of love, even the cords of a man. One would say that this was the charisma which at the beginning drew that hard Roman world into the Church, even more than the charisma of preaching. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was made. So the Church grew; the quiet waters of grace flooded souls and overflowed and reached other souls.

This gift is much needed to-day. It may not be bestowed on all, but it might be bestowed on many more, if only they were willing.

I had living with me once a beloved aunt, to whom I owed much. This lovely charisma was bestowed on her to an exceptional degree, and she used it with a rare fidelity. With a graciousness which prevented it from ever giving offence, she could lead people unconsciously to speak of Heaven, of God, of Christ, and bring them to the point where the question of personal faith became inevitable. How many she brought to Christ it was impossible to estimate. Once I told her how I wished I had that exquisite gift. She comforted me by reminding me that there were diversities of operations. "You," she said, "are able to preach the gospel to a multitude; that I could not do; but I can preach it to individuals." But it seemed to me then, and seems to me still, the better and the nobler gift, to be able to get into close contact with individuals and to win them to Christ by a personal appeal. That gift—and it must be a charisma, a gift of the Spirit—should be sought and received and employed by every Christian whom

Christ will deign to use in that way. It really lies at the root of the larger and more noticeable gifts, and for want of it much preaching and other Christian effort fails.

Sir George Williams, the founder of the Y.M.C.A., from the moment of his conversion in the Congregational Church at Bridgwater, received that charisma. In the large business house of Hitchcock and Williams, to which he was sent as an employee, he began at once to win his fellow-employees, and there the first Y.M.C.A. came into being. How he won a shy and difficult youth by giving him an oyster-supper, at which no word of religion was spoken; how that youth came uninvited into the prayer meeting and, won by patience and love, came to Christ, and entered his name on the first roll of the Young Men's Christian Association; how the small employee ventured to rebuke his employer for the use of bad language, and won his regard if not his soul—all this is to be read in the early chronicles of that great Association which has now spread over the world. But the gift George Williams had for reaching individuals fills one with admiration and a sanctified envy. He could accost a stranger in the street, outside his own door, and without giving any offence, seek to win him to Christ. When he crossed the Atlantic, he was able to speak to everyone on board, from the captain on the bridge to the stoker in the fo'c'sle, and none rebuffed him.

Truly, if we all considered the gift which might be stirred up within us; if we all used the opportunities which ordinary life presents of interesting others in Christ, and where needful bringing them to Him, or showing them the way, the whole country would be won, the circles would widen to the coasts, and even cross the sea. None need be useless, none need stand all the day idle in the market-place, when Christ's work waits to be done everywhere and at all times, and all that is needed is fidelity in using the talents He has given.

But what is the significance of the man with the one talent who hid it in a napkin? It is not suggested that he took umbrage because he had only *one* talent. The one with five or the one with two might just as easily have taken that course. We certainly are not to think that men with smaller

gifts are more prone to use them ill or to leave them unused than those more richly endowed. Experience points just in the opposite direction. The richly endowed are far more frequently chargeable with neglecting their endowments, or refusing to employ their many talents in Christ's service, than those far more numerous people who have but one. The world's work is done almost entirely by the ordinary people; and the extraordinary people chiefly mar or hinder the work by their egotism, their extravagance, their self-seeking and greed. The wars, the revolutions, the industrial unrest, are for the most part produced by extraordinary men. Only a Napoleon, in arms, or in finance or in politics, can produce a world-wide disaster.

And so, in the service of Christ, the highly gifted men very frequently use their talents for their own advancement and exaltation; they attain recognition, wealth, power, only to misuse them. Their judgment will be just and overwhelming. Meanwhile Christ's work is mainly done by the poor and the unlearned. It continues still as it was in the beginning; not many wise, not many great, are called. God has chosen the poor in this world rich in faith.

The Church is maintained mainly by the gifts and the labours of the poor. The work of missions is carried on not by millionaires, but by wage-earners and struggling women. The teachers in schools, the preachers, the organisers of the Church's work, are seldom people of conspicuous talents. The gifted people are at the Bar, in medicine, making money in commerce. But the twelve disciples are still in the main the humble and the ordinary. It must not therefore be supposed for a moment that the one-talented man is condemned, or fell into his fatal laxity because he had only one talent.

The neglect, which might quite as easily have occurred in the case of the others, was wholly due to indolence. He did not take life seriously; he shrank from exertion. It was so much simpler and pleasanter to wrap the talent up and put it away (he meant no dishonesty, and quite intended to return it to his lord unimpaired), than to exert himself and to employ it. It was so much more the line of least resistance to conjure up a grievance against his

lord, and to invent the theory of his harshness and unreasonableness, than to parry his censure by diligence.

This, it would seem, is the great charge which Christ, our Master, will bring against us, that we left our talents unused, that we knew to do good and did it not, that we loitered idle about the gate of His vineyard, but never went in to take a hand at the work. It will start up with a startling reality before many of us when the reckoning is made, that we left life's task undone while we amused ourselves or whiled the time away, that we have to appear before Christ empty-handed—nay, worse—holding in our hand the reproachful, the condemnatory unused talent.

That complaint of Christ against His Church, against the very people who claim to be redeemed by His precious blood and dedicated wholly to His service, must be vast, unimaginable ; it must cry to Heaven.

He counted on His followers to go into all the world and preach His gospel to every creature. He expected them to make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the threefold name, and teaching them to do what He had commanded. He promised to be with them all the days, if only they would be obedient, unto the end of the world. And what have they *done*, what have we done—nay, reader, what hast thou done, to carry out the Lord's command ?

This is our worst offence, our greatest sin—indolence, indifference, unconcern about that which was and is His supreme concern. Called to a high service, to an honourable warfare, we excuse ourselves, we leave it to others. We misrepresent Him, we libel Him, as an unjust master ; we invent negative theories about His Person and His work, about His gospels, and His Scripture and His Commission, all to escape the labour and the sacrifice which His service demands.

" I did this for thee : what hast thou done for me ? " is His searching question. Not only the young Zinzendorff stands in the gallery at Düsseldorf before that challenge of the Saviour on the Cross ; we all stand there before it. To each and all of us is the question addressed : What hast *thou done* for Me ? Not talked or dreamed, but *done* ? The young Zinzendorff was arrested, and set out a changed

man, to found the *Unitas Fratrum* and the foreign missionary enterprise of the modern world. Are we arrested, or if arrested, what have *we done*?

I have only one talent, we say. And how many had those poor peasants who started out from Herrnhut, with half a crown in their pocket, to preach Christ to the Esquimaux, to the negroes of Jamaica, to the aborigines of Australia? Nay, but art thou sure that thou hast only one talent? Is thy plea honest? Thou seekest great things for thyself; thou wilt rise to wealth and influence; thou wilt win titles and honours, with such talents as thou hast; and thou wilt not give them to Him, Who has an absolute claim over thee. "I did this for thee: what hast thou done for me?"

It is not suggested that everyone can be a missionary; but only that everyone should have the will to be, the readiness to be, and therefore the certainty of contributing to and helping Christ's work, in case to be a missionary be not possible. What *is* suggested, and overwhelmingly and convincingly brought home to all who believe in Christ and desire to be Christlike, is that every child of Adam can be a child of God, that every human being who believes in Christ has talent enough to serve Christ, greatly or sufficiently. There is not a person living on this planet to-day but, with faith in Christ and love to Christ, may make a real and decisive contribution to the coming of the Kingdom. The only hindrance is that we do not believe in Christ, do not love Christ, and therefore do not offer our talent to Him, or practise it and use it and develop it for His sake. Remove that hindrance. Bring yourself now, just as you are, not wasting time over the past which is lost, and offer yourself, body, mind and spirit—it is the service which reason dictates—that Christ may completely control your thoughts and direct your will, and, holding your heart in His, may work in you to will and to do just what you are capable of, what you were meant to do, for the glory of God.

The first task will open up immediately before you—quite simple, perhaps: to go and register yourself as a member of His Church, to undertake that little piece of work in a class, in a district, to speak bravely and simply to some-

one who is within reach. And that obvious and slight first duty done, at once opens up others, larger and more important. Then, by the sweet and gentle compulsions of His grace, you may be led into all the service of God and all the likeness of His Son.

"Why standest thou here all the day idle?" Certainly someone has hired thee.

BOOK III

THE METHOD

CHAPTER XXIII

THE METHOD

Spend no more time in stating the qualifications of a man of virtue, but endeavour to get them.—MARCUS AURELIUS.

WE have before us now, presumably, what kind of people Christ expects us to be. We draw from His Person, His precept, His authority, the application of the Christian religion to the circumstances of our day, to the needs of the evolving world. This is the Christian of to-day and to-morrow: the next day more may appear. His dominating principle and motive is to extend the Reign of God upon earth. He therefore trains himself to regard humanity as one, and to dismiss the prejudice of colour, race and language. He sees God as One, Humanity as one, and Christ as the Mediator between the two, showing the whole of God, claiming the whole of Humanity. He forgives freely and habitually the wrongs done to him, because he believes that God in Christ has forgiven the wrongs done to God.

He makes it his rule to act like the Good Samaritan to all who need his help, and whom he is able to help; so he interprets neighbourhood.

He constantly struggles to estimate men in Christ's way, not by what they possess but by what they are. He strives for an absolute honesty both by word and deed in all his dealings with others.

He has an open heart and a quick intelligence for childhood, and counts human life from the beginning sacred; he is ever striving in public as well as in private to give the children a chance.

He endeavours to be in the world as health, to keep

well by faith in Christ, to make others well by the same means, and to secure the conditions of health for all. He is in every narrower and wider sense a peacemaker.

He conscientiously seeks, and when he has found, exercises the faculties which God has entrusted to him for the service of God and the salvation of men.

Such a character we all at once recognise to be Christian. This is Christlikeness. Christ's purpose is that all men should be such, and that human society should become good and worthy and heavenly by all men being such, all men and all women.

But the question at once confronts us: How can we become such, be such, continue to be such? And this practical inquiry demands our closest attention.

The truth that we are saved by faith alone is apt to divert attention from the work of the will in the task of the Christian life. We are so afraid of the conception of being saved by works, that we regard works as a hindrance. This matter needs clearing up. We are saved by faith alone: no works of righteousness that we could do would suffice. Salvation is the gift of God in Christ Jesus; to it as a free gift of God we can make no contribution whatever, except the faith which simply accepts. But when that salvation is received and made ours by faith, we are engaged to a lifelong work, which is expressed in the apparently paradoxical command: "Work out your own salvation, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure." It was the danger that this would be overlooked which produced the Epistle of James, with its startling contradiction, to all appearance, of St. Paul's great doctrine that we are saved by faith alone. There is no real contradiction. This epistle, though it says we are saved by works, is only supplying an appendix to Paul's doctrine which Paul not only would have supplied, but actually did supply in all those great moral applications of his doctrine of grace, which are expressly made in every, or nearly every, epistle. Saved by faith meant to that great apostle a life of consecrated working, or, as he sometimes put it, a fight, a good fight, a lifelong fight of faith, the crown of which would be elsewhere and not here.

The gift of God is eternal life in Christ—that is beyond dispute. But what does that gift imply in the recipient? What has the believer to *do*? What does such a faith in Christ, such a joyous acceptance of the great and unspeakable gift, commit him to? It commits him to a life of holy energy, of active working; it is a call not to passivism, or quietism, or indolence, but to an increasing conflict with the powers of evil, a victorious conflict certainly, but not, because of assured victory, less strenuous, less vigilant, less resolute.

To be a Christian, especially in these days, makes, therefore, a great demand on every faculty of mind and body. Awake, thou that sleepest! Here is a call to gird up your loins, to go into training, to keep up a constant *askesis*. There is a heavenly race to run; there is a wrestle by the brook Jabbok; there are hosts to be confronted and to be routed. Let no one think of the Christian as a pacifist; he is a good soldier, in constant training, and kept in training by constant service.

"It is a great and noble venture to take our way to God," said one of the earliest of the fathers. That is the Christian venture. Whatever may be the business of life, this comes first. This is the primary demand; thought, energy, time, are all wasted unless this claim is first allowed and room is made for its achievement.

We are to consider, then, what we have to do in order that we may become Christlike. We know that unless it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, we never can be Christlike; but we know too that He will not, even we may say cannot, make us Christlike, unless we ourselves do our part, unless, that is, we desire with all our hearts to be Christlike, and will take the means to receive the divine power which alone can produce the result.

Those means open up with sufficient clearness and fullness as soon as the desire awakes, and in proportion as it grows strong, in the heart. We may blunder and flounder, especially at the beginning; we may try some means which have served others, and find that for us they are useless. We may find means which would and should help us, and yet, from

inexperience and sloth, not at first succeed in using them. But, if with all our heart we truly seek Him, we shall ever surely find Him. The eager longing to be Christlike does, in the order of nature, and still more of grace, achieve itself. As that passionate desire, that set purpose, is so much the most important thing, it should be recognised that all means are tentative. It is not the means that are prescribed, but the end. We cannot, therefore, suggest or commend all the means, still less can we say that such means as are mentioned are necessary to all. Victorious life flows into every cranny; God's new ways appear in each generation. Old methods, old devotions, old disciplines, once so salutary and efficacious, may lose their power and their value. New and unexpected aids may emerge, and we should watch for their emergence. The one thing needful is the overmastering desire to be Christlike, and the eager readiness to take any course, to attempt any discipline which might lead to the result. But with this proviso, there are certain ways, new and old, by which men have set about to achieve that likeness of Christ, and on these we may dwell, and consider whether or how we should try them.

Always a simpler and more accessible way may open, as in that notable instance of Brother Lawrence, whose whole life of Christlikeness grew out of one suggestion from Nature. As a boy of eighteen he watched a tree, and reflected that presently in spring it would be clothed with foliage; this gave him a sense of the living and life-giving presence of God everywhere. It became his practice to realise this presence continually, until by long use it was habitual, and he found himself in the Presence, not only in the hours and places of special devotion, but even in the common work of the kitchen (he was the scullion of the monastery). And great numbers of humble souls find access to that habitual Presence by the name of Jesus. They think of Him daily and find Him there; they find themselves at last almost unconsciously walking in His steps. There is a simplicity in Christ which must not be spoiled by a vain philosophy: there is a law of liberty in Christ which must not be violated by elaborate regulations. The new Decalogue must never be formalised and

crystalised. The new life in Christ must never be assimilated to the old life of the law.

Where the Spirit of Christ is there is liberty. And no man, no priest, no Church, is entitled to say: this method you must adopt, this form you must observe, this way you must take, or you can never really know or obey Christ. Whatever methods, laws, or institutions are commended, Christ can and will meet the soul He wants and seeks, outside them all. How often has He met with His radiant smile those who have just been banned by all the ecclesiastical authorities. John Huss, in the Council of Constance, was handed over to the secular arm for execution (July 6, 1415), and the assembled prelates solemnly consigned his soul to Satan. But he with quiet joy consigned his soul to Christ; and as the smoke choked his *Kyrie eleison*, his spirit passed with great peace into the hands of his Saviour.

Christ has not therefore promised to confine Himself to any methods which in the course of time are devised, or by long usage consecrated. If He works by the baptism of water, and the Eucharist of bread and wine, He will also, despite all the rage and violence of His would-be representatives, regenerate the souls of Quakers without water, and feed them through long years of faithful service without the bread and wine of the sacrament.

But there are certain things which we may do, certain ways in which we may walk, in order to gain the Christ-likeness of which we are in search. And the rest of this book shall be devoted to a few of these ways and means of the spiritual life, such as Meditation, Autosuggestion, Habituation, Association, Imitation, Self-offering, Self-examination, Confession, and the deliberate practice and cultivation of Faith and Hope and Love.

The burning desire to be Christlike will sustain us even in this arduous discipline.

CHAPTER XXIV

MEDITATION

MEDITATION, like prayer generally, plays a certain fitful part in every human life; but, like prayer generally, it needs to be realised and practised systematically if its value is to be discovered. As a means for becoming Christ-like it is indispensable. For meditation is the way by which the soul enters into a dialogue, an intercourse, an intimate relation, with Christ Himself. Better than a definition of this spiritual exercise—definitions in these matters are vague and shifting and arbitrary—is an illustration or two. The *Confessions* of St. Augustine are the earliest example of sustained and habitual meditation.

"Magnus es, Domine"—so the immortal work begins—"et laudabilis valde." This human soul is talking in the most direct and personal way with God. "Magna virtus tua, et sapientiæ tuæ non est numerus. Et laudare te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturæ tuæ; et homo circumferens mortalitatem suam, circumferens testimonium peccati sui, et testimonium quia superbis resistis; et tamen laudare te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturæ tuæ." One fears to translate it from the rich and supple language of the fifth century into the common speech of to-day. A true translation could only be meditative, the outcome of an experience, the same experience of an intimate colloquy between a soul and God, between a creature and its Creator. But here the theme is opened; here the ship leaves the port; a man is in close communion with God, and is learning things about himself and about God, and about the universe, by that intercourse. "Thou art great, O Lord," that is the awe-struck beginning, "and strongly to be praised. Great is Thy virtue, and of Thy wisdom there is no reckoning. And

man, a fragment of Thy creation, wishes to praise Thee, even man carrying about with him his mortality, carrying about with him the witness of his sin, and the witness, Thou resistest the proud; and yet he wishes to praise Thee, a fragment of Thy creation."

That is the gist and the manner of meditation. The mind holds steadily before itself God and itself; God, all that He is; itself, all that it is; until the two come together in an active relation, and God moulds and instructs and expands the soul in a direct and creative way. Not all in the *Confessions* is of direct value to us, though all was of value to Augustine; but the method, the process, is of lasting value to us all; it teaches us to meditate, though not in Augustine's words or ways; it reveals to us the possibility. It is a process by which the human consciousness touches the divine, and the whole vast reality of God is gradually assimilated by the soul.

Another illustration is the *Imitatio Christi* of Thomas à Kempis. The book as a whole is the outcome of meditation, and reveals its processes. The soul is quieted, probably for some hours together. Its attention is settled on Christ—not so much words of Christ, or acts of Christ, but Christ Himself—until Christ is recognised as present, and the dialogue begins. The result of a meditation like this is that Christ speaks to the soul in the most direct way of reproof and of encouragement. The soul answers, but becomes increasingly anxious rather to hear what Christ says than to speak. The imitation of Christ proves to be in this way rather an inward reception of Christ as the authority, the teacher, the lover, the inspirer. It is revealed that by this method of meditation Christ bears, as the Vine, His fruit through the branches; by this method a fountain of living waters is opened within, and begins to flow; by this method Christ becomes the Bread, the supersubstantial Bread, and the wine of heaven to the soul. And the strong image of eating the flesh of the Son of Man and drinking His blood is found to describe a direct spiritual experience, no *opus operatum*, no stroke of magic, but a designed merging of two personalities, the personality of a man and the personality of the Saviour of men.

The true use of the *Imitatio* is not to repeat the words or even the experiences of this fifteenth-century Christian—that mechanical and formal use of the book may become a bondage—but to find by the same method the same intercourse with Christ, here in this twentieth century. Knowledge has grown; the universe is vastly extended since Thomas à Kempis wrote. His mental outlook and mental furniture cannot be ours, except by the deliberate cramping of the mind and the consequent suppression of our powers. But this method can be used, and it is by the use of this method that the same direct intercourse with Christ is maintained; and by this method the soul can take in the extended knowledge of our time and bring it all into harmony with the same indwelling and inwardly teaching Christ.

But there is an unexpected aid to the understanding of meditation from the posthumous book of Professor Allnatt, of Quebec.[1] He is writing of meditation as a practice of his priests, and has wise things to say: but he would say them to us all who are in search of Christ-likeness.

"Meditation may be regarded as in a sense the highest form of private devotion; perhaps also the most difficult. It demands, and implies, a condition of actual nearness to the life of Christ, as well as direct and effectual consciousness of His presence. . . . It is necessarily extemporaneous."

Forms of prayer may be a hindrance. But this meditation is, as we have seen, a dialogue. "The man who habituates himself in this manner to address his inmost thoughts directly to God, will soon discover that the very act of so doing has the effect of introducing into his mind, as responses to his own utterances, thoughts which are certainly not originated there; thoughts deeper and higher than any of which he would be capable by his own personal mental efforts."

In a word, he has come into actual touch with Christ, or we might say with God through Christ. Truth is sliding into his mind; signals are given, the path is indicated; the fire burns; there is a sense of inspiration. "My Lord

[1] *Studies in Soul Tending*, by the late F. J. B. Allnatt, D.D., D.C.L. (S.P.C.K.)

is near," he says to himself; "Christ is veritably speaking to *me*."

Yes, meditation is the deliberate and conscious quieting the mind and directing it to the source of its being, in the full expectation that God will communicate Himself, not necessarily by any outward sign but *through the medium of the mind's own current of thought.*

Find out how you can practise this kind of concentration on Christ in the way most effective for you. We differ widely. One finds a silent chamber necessary; another finds the communion best in the open air. One must kneel with eyes closed. Another gets on better pacing a familiar spot in garden or wood or by the sea. Samuel Rutherford wore a little path in the wood at Anwoth, where he maintained this fellowship with the beloved Lord. St. Francis found Monte Alverna, a bare height, with a little wattle shelter, the most favourable condition. Directions and practices of others do not always help.

The one thing needed is an inward collection of the powers, a concentration on Christ, and a sufficiently long detachment from external things, to realise the Presence. The photographic plate in the telescope must be exposed for some hours, if the distant and unseen stars are to be recorded there. And failure in meditation comes from being hurried and distracted. "Wait patiently on Him" is the counsel of all those who have discovered the secret. Get up early to have time in the quiet house. Withdraw at set seasons into your chamber, or into a still place, with trees and streams and only the unspeaking creatures. But give your Lord a chance of an audience; be reverently open to His approach; consider that the King comes first.

But shall I know when He is present? Is there some sign? There is no speech nor language; His voice is not heard. And yet there is a sign, and you know He is present. At length in meditation there comes a stillness, the restless senses fall into a harmony. Things around fall into a calm. The world and its ways seem under a higher control. Doubt and fear die down. Yes, He is there, the Divine Word, lighting, soothing, teaching, healing, inspiring. Most assuredly you know that He is present, the very One whose

memorials of speech and deed are recorded in the Gospels, the very One who said: Lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the world.

Let it be clearly understood that He does not announce Himself to the senses, but Spirit meets spirit. The reward of meditation is the discovery that we have entered a spiritual world, which is not spatial or temporal; and yet that Spiritual is the Real.

Professor Allnatt shall now counsel us from his experience about giving practical shape to the meditation itself. In a subject so mystical and intangible it is a relief to find one so matter-of-fact, such an embodiment of common sense: "Meditation to be of any use must be a practical thing; mere devout dreaming is not the thing you are aiming at. The practice of this exercise with any degree of real benefit is no light or easy matter. It calls for steady and strenuous effort. Much depends on the selection of your subject; this must be something clear and definite, something which you feel to be essential to your soul's requirements. It may be a particular form of need, of difficulty, of sin, of infirmity, of sorrow, of perplexity, of anxiety, of joy or comfort, of thankfulness or praise, some thought or question calling for an expression on your part, and seeking an answer on the part of your Lord.

"A text of Scripture may oftentimes be selected as a starting-point, and it is desirable to supply yourself with material for following up any thoughts which may occur. The Bible and Greek Testament will be essential, and a Greek Testament concordance will also be very helpful. It is very necessary to have a distinct and practical purpose before you, something definite to be kept in view; or there is a danger of degenerating into devout dreaming. You must take heed that your subject follows a definite line of thought and does not diverge into by-paths. To avoid this latter you will need to preserve your recollectedness, your consciousness of the presence of Him whom you are addressing, as well as the attitude of attention, *as expecting, looking for, a response from Him,* to be borne in upon your mind in the form of luminous and elevating thoughts.

"This practice of meditation will be found to acquire

a character of fascination belonging to no other form of mental or spiritual exercise. The worshipper will be surprised by the manner in which, apparently by the sole process of his own thoughts, difficulties will clear themselves away, while doubt and uncertainty, trouble and despondency and mental disquiet will give place to a sense of peace and comfort, and even joy. . . . But time must be secured for the deliberate expansion of thought in which the essence of this exercise consists.

"One very suitable subject for meditation would be that of hindrances to the spiritual life in those special forms which must beset the worshipper at that particular time. The treatment of these is generally conducive to a sense of comfort, and even joy, which is one of the usual accompaniments of this exercise."

Let me now offer an illustration from experience, an example of meditation fulfilling such a practical end as is here suggested.

When *The Outline of Science*, edited by Professor Arthur Thomson, appeared, I found these discoveries crowding in, and a conception of the universe presented which seemed to overthrow the traditional conceptions of God and His creation. How to reconcile these facts, presumably established and irrefragable, with the Bible, with Christianity, or even with any religion at all, seemed an insoluble problem. If this view of the universe or universes was so disturbing to me, what would it be to younger minds, and to those who will be brought up in the future with this view and none other? Darkness seemed to fill the sky. All the old beliefs seemed to be crumbling away. Doubtless the reconciliation between new knowledge and the old faith would come one day. But no writer had yet tackled the problem. Thought had not readjusted itself. Meanwhile it was my duty to teach and to help others. To smother up my perplexity, to go on as if nothing had happened, was intellectually impossible, even if it had not been also spiritually deadening. Fresh reading and thinking could be undertaken; counsel of those who had thought and known might be sought. Prayer could be and was offered for light and guidance. But the only accessible mode of seeking and gaining that

needed help was by *meditation*. I will try to chronicle the result.

I tried calmly to present to my mind the situation, the whole scheme of things as science unfolds it and articulates it to the intelligence of our time. The question in my mind, which I could by no means answer offhand, was how could this world of new knowledge consist with the belief in a personal God, and how could Christ and His gospel find any place in this vast and bewildering complex. Certainly the scientific aspect of things cannot be known without much reading and study. But as it is known, the reconciliation of it with religion could only be known by a process other than study, by a power other than, and above, the individual mind.

I saw the sidereal system as science reveals it—there was our solar system shining as a point of light in the multitude of similar, and vaster, systems. The nearest of those other systems was twenty-five billions of miles away. A million; I tried to conceive it—then a million of such millions—a billion, then twenty-five of these billions of miles—and the traveller through space would arrive at that neighbouring solar system. But such systems, at similar distances, crowd the midnight sky. In the tiny Pleiades alone there are four hundred such systems. So distant is the farthest discernible through our telescopes, that light travelling at the rate of ninety-three millions of miles in eight minutes has taken 50,000 years to cross the universe. This is the universe; nay, there is some suspicion that this is only one universe, a nebula in the midst of other universes which appear to us as nebulæ.

"When I consider the heavens, the work of thy hands," said the Psalmist, and he thought of the heavens as a curtain overhanging this vast plane of the earth, dotted with points of light, set there, with the sun and the moon, to illumine *us*! Even so, he was awed and humbled; what is man that Thou thinkest of him? But this universe as we now see it, these heavens as we now read them—we cry not only, "What is man?" but "What is God?" How can we, even in the faintest way, conceive a Being who made all these? Especially, how can we regard Him as a Person, who

could possibly enter into personal relations with us? Our conception of God must enlarge on the scale of this incalculable enlargement of the universe. God is Infinite.

But contracting our gaze to our own solar system, we are baffled again by the inconceivable magnitude of things. The sun is a blazing sphere 300,000 times the size of our earth. In that pulsing and shooting furnace of heat no life could exist. The source of life on our planet is a body in which there neither is nor could be life. What a mystery! Of the planets the earth and possibly Mars are the only orbits in which life could be. The nearer planets would be too hot, the distant planets far too cold. That vast orb Uranus, rolling round its orbit in the course of many years —how does it belong to this little system? What a speck is the earth in the huge star of which Uranus is the outer satellite!

To think of God as the maker of this one solar system, conceiving that fire-mist from which originated sun and planets and comets, as the maker and the orderer and the sustainer; even that taxes the mind almost beyond endurance— a Personal God in Uranus, in the fiery centre of the sun, in this tiny planet. Evidently there must be some great enlargement of our conception even to grasp such a God, though we should try to forget those myriads of solar systems which are the work of His hand.

Then withdraw the mind to this tiny earth, this island of habitation in the terrific lifeless sun system. Here life came. How or when, or what it is, no power of the mind has hitherto been able to explain. It began in the seas, it made its way to the shores in amphibious forms; there it branched out into birds and mammals, and found a terminal stay in insects. But along the line of the mammals it worked towards *man*; first there were apes, then tentative forms of humanity like the Neanderthal man; then primitive men with certain artistic gifts, the Cro-magnon, and suggestions in their tombs of something like religion, a belief in an after-life and in beings superhuman. At length life reached man, such as we are, the very race to which we belong, beings who can develop moral relations with one another, who can speculate about their origin and their

destiny, who can remember and record, and begin to make history, who can form primitive religious conceptions capable of growing, of penetrating before and behind, beneath and above. Life emerged at last in our consciousness, our social consciousness, our race consciousness, and produced a philosophy, ethics, religion. Man was a being conscious of God.

As the mind holds before it the vast unimaginable stretch of space, in which is the universe of universes, the inconceivable stretch of time in which this solar system came to be, the process of the coming and evolution of life on this planet, the unrecorded millennia of prehistoric man, the very few millennia of history, it cannot but be conscious that the coming of man was an episode of vast significance. This mind which is discovering and grasping all is necessarily to itself important, and in a sense greater than all. The coming of man was an achievement of cosmic evolution.

But still, what man was meant for, what he was to accomplish, remained obscure, despite all his thought, his myths, his dreams, his cogitations, his religions, until Ideal Man came. Christ appears in the course of historic evolution, as true a starting-point as life itself in the course of cosmic evolution. With His coming opened a new possibility, to which much had pointed, but which until then had seemed impossible, an ideal human society, a unified Humanity, a Kingdom of God upon earth.

Great as was the advance of the Kingdom of Man on the Kingdom of the Brute, the advance of the Kingdom of God on the Kingdom of Man was greater.

The cause of this system of things revealed by science is the Infinite. But that Infinite which made those starry constellations and galaxies and nebulæ made this solar and planetary system among them, and this small earth as the scene of life; made man, surely in its own image, because man can conceive it, and search after it and find it; made Christ, Ideal Man, and brought into the earth the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thus in meditation the old faith and the new knowledge came together not as antagonistic, or contradictory to one another. The new knowledge has enlarged our conception

of God to a degree that the earlier conceptions seem like the thoughts of children, of ignorant children. The opening chapter of Genesis reads like the naïve poetry of a God-inspired child trying to picture the origin of things. But God, conceived on the vast scale of the universe now known, has produced our consciousness in the development of life on the earth, and has wrought in our consciousness a certain innate and instinctive knowledge of Himself. He has sent Christ, to enlighten humanity and to unite it with Himself.

So far from the New Knowledge discrediting the old faith, it brings confirmation and justification of Christ as the Saviour of the World. It adds another touch to His Saviourhood. He always was recognised as the Saviour from sin, from sorrow, and from death. But now He is also the Saviour from the terror of the Infinite. The vast universe seems so homeless, so comfortless; its spaces of darkness so intraversible; its lights consuming fires; the awe of it is too much for us unless it is veiled and tempered in the envelope of atmosphere and made intelligible for us in a human guise. He has made the terrifying universe gentle to us, a home for our dwelling, a promise for an eternal life.

My meditation ended by a new eager and passionate turning to Him, our Saviour Christ. Weary and heavy laden with the vastness of things, with the burden of the unintelligible world, striving to hold and to reconcile the facts of the infinitely great and of the infinitesimally small, the appalling revelation of the sidereal heavens and the equally appalling revelation of the stored forces of the atom, I, a human being, so limited, so shortlived, came into Him and found rest.

I found in Him my resting-place,
And He has made me glad.

CHAPTER XXV

AUTOSUGGESTION

When M. Coué established by the Nancy experiments the power of Autosuggestion in the cure and prevention of disease and the maintenance of health, he was rendering a great service not only to humanity but to religion. He was pointing out, undesignedly, the way in which powerful spiritual influences can be brought to bear on the individual, the way in which the religious life has been unconsciously developed, the way in which it may be more effectively developed, as the principle and method are more clearly understood. It is a way which was empirically known in the Book of Proverbs, in the direct teaching of Jesus, in explicit words of St. Paul. "Keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," is the equivalent in Hebrew for thought-control and thought-working. The "heart" was to the Hebrew the source of mental activity. Our Lord laid bare the same truth when He showed that the "heart" was the spring of good and evil; evil thoughts were already evil deeds; want of mind, folly as it is called, was one of the worst moral defects. And the command to fix the attention on whatever is good, and true, and lovely, on virtue and praise, as the best way of avoiding their opposites, anticipates all that has been discovered on these lines.

But what the Nancy clinic has made plain is that thought, self-suggested, operates and produces much which lies beyond the power of the will. For example, in trying to escape insomnia, the exertion of the will to sleep may actually keep you awake. But the suggestion of sleep, quietly introduced into the mind, the assurance that sleep is coming, will set at work forces in the subconscious mind which will

induce sleep. The part of the will is limited to making the suggestion; that vast unexplored realm of energy and life, which carries on its operations without exciting consciousness, will do the rest.

It is obvious that this discovery opens an immense unexplored field of religious development. The will strives in vain to overcome a temptation; the temptation gathers force from every effort at resistance. The assailant, envisaged, that we may do battle with him, seizes that very envisaging as the means of his assault and victory.

Similarly the will to do good, being a concentration of all conscious powers to accomplish the result, finds itself unequal to the task, and falls back baffled and discouraged.

But autosuggestion comes in; the idea of complete escape from the temptation is presented: the assailant is pictured as defeated and powerless; and a force is brought into operation, much more subtle and powerful than the will, which breaks the power of the temptation and renders it nugatory. Or that good which you would do, but are powerless to do, is presented as not only doable, but done. And that unseen unconscious force, more powerful than will, proceeds to do it; how, you do not know.

Now here we have a method of learning of Christ and following Him which has been always more or less practised, but may be developed much better by the intelligent apprehension of what we are doing. The will to be like Christ, to do what He would do under the circumstances, or at least what He would approve, is not of itself strong enough or instructed enough to make us successful. Natural tendencies, our infirmities, our vices, deflect our course. Suddenly we lose our temper when we are trying to be Christlike; the lie or the evasion slips from our lips unaware: the love of pleasure blinds us to duty; the appetite for indulgence swerves us from the plain footprints of the Master. Direct and detailed imitation of Christ is too much for us. Failures breed despondency and discouragement and we are prone to give up. But we proceed by way of suggestion, suggestion which we are able ourselves to make. M. Coué recommended the frequent repetition, in moments of susceptibility such as the passing from consciousness to

unconsciousness in sleep, or the reverse process in waking, of a simple formula: "Day by day in every way I am getting better and better." The effect of that practice on the health has been experienced by many. But here is something more important than health, and it is susceptible to the same method of treatment. Nay, it may be even subsumed under the terms of the formula which was proposed. "Better and better" may be understood as "more and more Christlike." It may be reckoned that Christlikeness includes physical and mental health; for there is no sign that Jesus was ever ill, or ever suffered from any mental aberration. The greater includes the less. To be Christlike means to be physically well and mentally sound, but also morally right, and spiritually in unbroken communion with God. Now faith bids us receive Christ in this sense, to abide in Him so that He abides in us, and bears the fruit of the Vine in us the branches We are entitled, therefore, to make this constant suggestion to ourselves, varied perhaps in expression, but fundamentally always the same: "I am in Christ, and Christ is in me." As the eyes wake from sleep, repeat slowly and emphatically, aloud if may be, the words, "No longer I that live, Christ liveth in me." As you fall asleep repeat some such sentence as "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

But not only in the moment of falling asleep or waking, but in all the events of the day, in any pause or moment of reflection, you can breathe the Name, or reiterate: "I can do all things through Him Who empowers me—gives me the dynamic."

What is the result? Before entering into any more detail, let us observe what happens. The idea of Christ settles down in the unconscious self and begins to work through all the unconscious processes of mind and will. Just as, quite unconsciously, the vital force works through the body, dispatches succour to an imperilled or an injured part, carries on all the process of blood circulation and aeration, digestion, perception and action, so this thought, this idea of Christ, sets in motion the power which resists temptation, restores and heals, stimulates to good actions, restrains from evil. The power of suggestion, set in motion

by the will, accomplishes what bare will never can That unconscious self is so much larger, more constant in operation, more varied in its developments, than the conscious self, that even the complicated and limitless task of making us Christlike is not beyond its reach.

But to come down a little more into detail: the Gospel narratives are peculiarly adapted for this practice of auto-suggestion. In them, from four different points of view, Christ is presented, not by way of general statements or broad descriptions, but by the enumeration of certain sayings and doings in some detail. Only once, in the prologue of the Fourth Gospel, is a generalisation attempted, viz. that Jesus Who thus lived and wrought among men was the Word of God, the Divine instrument of creation and giver of life and light, identical intrinsically with God Himself. Only in this place is there a hint at a philosophy, a theology, a theosophy. Elsewhere there is simply the portraiture of a human life, lived among men, episodes varied enough to cover broadly all conditions of life from the cradle to the grave, deeds of love and mercy, teachings, sometimes parabolic, sometimes quite plain. This mode of presentation lends itself to a regular and habitual absorption of the morsels which together make the whole. *Exerceatur servus tuus in vitâ tuâ*, said Thomas à Kempis. A single episode, a single discourse, a single parable, a single saying may be taken, and dwelt on, and allowed to expand in the mind into manifold ramifications. And thus little by little, like the sediment forming in the primeval seas, which is one day to be heaved up to the light as the stratified rocks, the life of Jesus settles down into the unconscious mind, and works steadily and constantly in moulding the character to His likeness. In many cases a single episode or word of Jesus will suffice to work this miracle of moulding and transformation. There are texts in the Gospels, e.g. the "Come unto me" of Matt. xi. or the "God so loved the world" of John iii. 16, which, sunk into the mind, have effected the complete change which can only be called a rebirth. An instance of unusual interest occurred in Japan, and has come to our knowledge through the book of Miss Macdonald entitled *A Gentleman in Prison*.[1]

[1] Vide p. 156.

This is the story, written by himself, of Tokichi Ishii, a criminal, who after committing many crimes handed himself over to justice to save another man who was charged with one of them. He lay in prison at Tokyo under sentence of death, when Caroline Macdonald visited him and left him a New Testament. For lack of other occupation he turned over the little book. But one day he came to the story of the Crucifixion. "I went on," he writes, "and my attention was taken by the words, 'And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' I stopped; I was stabbed to the heart, as if pierced by a five-inch nail. What did the verse reveal to me? Shall I call it the love of the heart of Christ? Shall I call it His compassion? I do not know what to call it. I only know that with an unspeakably grateful heart I believed. Through this simple sentence I was led into the whole of Christianity. What else could I believe but that He was the Son of God?" From this single suggestion came a life in prison which astonished not only Miss Macdonald but also the prison officials. He came to be at peace with all, the judge, the lawyer, the warder, the Buddhist chaplain. Full of contrition for his past life, he lifts his face in humble confidence to God. The MS. of this remarkable narrative, which Dr. Kelman calls one of the world's great stories, was completed on July 24, 1918. Miss Macdonald describes her last visit to him a fortnight later:—

"What did we talk about? I read to him parts of Ps. cxvi. As I stood there in a tiny cubby-hole and talked to him across a passage-way and through a wire grating, it seemed impossible to believe the words were not written for the very thing we faced there in the prison, 'I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplication. The cords of death compassed me, the pains of Sheol gat hold upon me: then called I on the name of the Lord. . . . I was brought low, and He saved me'—I looked at him and his eyes were glowing with joy."

Ten days latter the Buddhist chaplain wrote: "This morning Tokichi Ishii was executed in Tokyo prison. He faced death rejoicing greatly in the grace of God, with quietness and steadiness of heart. His last words were, 'My soul purified returns to-day to the city of God.'"

What was wrought so swiftly by the suggestion of Christ's forgiving love in the Tokyo prison—a kind of forcing house of a spiritual seed—has for most of us to be wrought out little by little through long years. And while one word of Christ could do so much, all His words one by one assimilated can do more. The goal is that we may grow into the fullness of the measure of His stature. The attempt should be made to get all the Gospels wrought into the very texture of the inner life. Not learnt by heart in the sense of "by rote," but in the sense of being read, marked, learned and inwardly digested. Each heart should be another Gospel; all the forces of Christ should be constantly and steadily pressing on the direction and expansion of each day's life.

Prayer, our daily prayer, whether at set times, or ejaculatory, should be in effect the constant autosuggestion of Christ's presence and Christ's sufficiency, and the assertion of faith that we can be like Him and are, by His grace, the indwelling of His Spirit, becoming like Him.

An objection may be made, and is, indeed, obvious: "Surely this means that your religion is a fiction, the work of your mind." As scepticism has sought to discredit faith by ascribing it to the will to believe—"You believe," it says, "what you wish to believe"—now it will doubtless say that our Christianity is only autosuggestion. Professor William James gave a sufficient answer to the former objection in his book, *The Will to Believe*. It is no real objection to belief that the element of will enters in. Without the will to believe we should believe nothing. And the charge that this Christian life is the result of autosuggestion need not be too absolutely rebutted. Does the sceptic say: "Your faith is autosuggestion," the retort is obvious: "So is your unbelief." The quarrel between faith and unbelief cannot turn upon a charge of autosuggestion. The unbeliever has reached his position by receiving suggestions, or making them himself, that there is no historic evidence of Christianity, no proof of God, no possibility of prayer, and so on. He has read everything that tells against the faith, and impatiently swept aside all that tells for it. It would astonish him if he would face the extent to which his

unbelief is the result of his will not to believe, and if he could realise the constant process of autosuggestion by which his unbelief becomes an operative power in his life and at last an impossibility of faith.

It is not, therefore, any argument against a Christian life that autosuggestion is employed as a method of producing it; nor is it any argument against the method of autosuggestion that it can, according to choice, produce opposite results.

We in this discussion have started with the wish to be Christlike. That is the Ideal before us, an Ideal which at first seems out of reach. Like the health which the sick man seeks, finding the will to be all insufficient, this likeness to Christ which we desire is not attained by good intentions, nor by the best will in the world. But the way of autosuggestion, which modern psychology has elucidated for us, comes in as a great and practical aid.

For example, Christ's love to men seems unattainable to us. We can love our own, a few, or one. We can even love, in a modified sense, a large circle of friends. We can, in a still more dubious sense, love not our own countrymen, but our country. (What a supreme contempt the patriot has for the large majority of his own nationals!) But to love men as men, all the world over, men of other colours, other tongues, other views of life, that certainly we can hardly hope to achieve. And yet that, we believe, was Christ's attitude. It was men and women as such that He loved. Meet them where He would, He was ready to help them all. It was the whole race of men that He had consciously and deliberately come to save. And we would be Christlike.

Now suggest to yourself, at the times proposed and even more frequently, that it is possible to look at men through His eyes rather than your own; suggest that you do as a matter of fact renounce your own *feeling* in favour of His, your own judgment of men, to make way for His. This autosuggestion, going so far beyond what at first you would think possible, and encountering such manifold opposition from your prejudices, your convictions, and even your common sense, may not immediately produce any result. The attempt to force it by an effort of the will is

not likely to succeed. Of all efforts that the will makes none seems more futile than the attempt to love. There, in the matter of loving people, we seem wholly at the disposal of some other forces than our own. We love people, or we do not, and there's an end of it: we cannot be rid of the love for those we love, but equally we cannot force the love for those we do not. We cannot, we never could, love So-and-so. Nothing could make us love a coloured man, an Asiatic, an American, an ex-enemy, etc. That is our genuine conviction.

But now this suggestion has sunk into the unconscious depths of our being: it is only a thought, an idea, a kind of syllogism: Christ loved all men; I am Christ's and He is living in me; therefore I must, I do, love all men too.

This suggestion begins to work in those mysterious depths where the will cannot follow it to help or to hinder. And presently there emerges in you a new emotion; it rises, it pervades your being, it affects all your judgments of others and all your attitude to mankind. You find you are loving men as men, good men with admiration, bad men with Christ's redeeming pity. This movement goes on gathering strength continually. The old harsh judgments and prejudices against certain nations or certain classes of people die on your lips. No, you cannot judge; you love. The contempt and dislike for certain individuals or sorts of individuals slink away ashamed. The love of Christ has conquered.

You meet your old enemy, whom once you hated, whom then with a great effort you succeeded in ignoring and dismissing from your thought. You meet him, and you find you love him; a great miraculous nimbus, a golden nimbus, seems to enwrap him; you see him in another light altogether; you are reconciled. This is Christlikeness prevailing over nature. The autosuggestion has released powers within you, powers which assuredly come from the God of Peace, and these powers, not your own will, have produced the change.

Or take another instance. The application of Christ's Spirit to practical affairs, the conduct of a business, the vote in a political issue, the personal relation with other

people, is extraordinarily difficult. So difficult is the task that many give it up. It is as much as they can do to find Christ's Spirit at work in their religion, in sacraments, in worship, in secret devotion. But in the world of business they allow themselves to be governed by what they believe is economic necessity; in politics they follow their party whatever it does, and defend their country right or wrong; in their relation with others they are swayed by likes or dislikes, by prejudices and compromises and uncharities as if Christ were not and had never been.

But now make the persistent suggestion to yourself, that Christ would know infallibly in the situation what to do. He would know how to carry out a business transaction without violating His law of love. He would know what to do, how to vote, how to act, in a crisis, or a sudden call of the country. He would know how to behave to this individual or that, the thing to say, or the thing not to say. Impress on your mind the idea that what He knows He can tell you; what He would do, He can enable you to do; His attitude, His demeanour, He can impart to you. Let that conviction quietly sink in. What results? In these situations which beforehand in thought seem quite unmanageable, though you could not by any effort of mind or will decide, there comes, like a stream flowing from an invisible source, a mental vision, a clear revelation of the right thing to do or to say, a bridle on your tongue, a word put into your mouth. You do what you had not before conceived possible. The Invisible Power has worked in you to will and to do after the example and spirit of Christ.

Or to go back to the very springs of conduct. You know that your thoughts not only lead to actions, but are, in Christ's judgment, already actions. The thought of malice is in effect murder: the thought of lust is in effect adultery or fornication; the thought of an ill-deed is itself an ill-deed. And yet you find yourself powerless to control your thought; with an effort you may restrain your tongue, but thought is free and unbridled, and seems to move not only without, but in defiance of, the will.

Now in this acknowledged and weary difficulty try the method of suggestion. Suggest to yourself repeatedly and

constantly that every thought can be brought into subjection to Christ, that His Holy Spirit can anticipate the thoughts, and direct their emergence and development. Insist on this thought as a master-thought, that Christ can rule and control all the operations of the mind even before they come into consciousness.

Here the result very quickly makes itself felt, and is very wonderful in its working. It is as if some inner fountain of thoughts were unsealed and ideas came of themselves, Christ-suggestions, plans, possibilities, reasonings, demonstrations.

The undesirable thoughts are mastered and expelled, not by struggling against them, but by a constant stream of other thoughts, the good, the true, the beautiful, the design to be good, to assert truth, to achieve beauty.

Just as thinking on evil deeds gets evil deeds done; just as the constant reading and thinking of salacious fiction produces the vast impurity of modern society; so, on the other hand, the autosuggestion of Christ as the indwelling and ruling power within produces a life and conduct in harmony with Him.

Thus the whole inward life, especially that unconscious part, so unfathomable and mysterious, out of which our conscious life emerges day by day, may be pervaded with the one self-developing idea of being Christlike, and of the possibility of being Christlike, and of the measure of fulfilment which lies already in the desire and purpose, so that, by what seems at last an instinct, conscious action is determined by the one principle.

There may be failures and disappointments, a wavering of purpose, a distraction of attention, a terrible wave of temptation, overmastering insurgence of passion and appetite. Truly, everyone must take up a cross to follow Christ. But he who will use this power of autosuggestion aright, and will apply it to the one end of becoming like Christ, may so study Christ's life, may so think out its applications to his own life, may so keep the Image of Christ before his mental eye, that gradually, but surely, that Image within works out in character and conduct. Without knowing it, his person and countenance may suggest Christ, and almost

automatically, without particular effort or conscious struggle at the time, he may come to act in each situation as Christ would act, to speak what is in reality Christ's word, and even to keep all the meditations of his heart under the control and at the prompting of the Spirit of his Lord.

CHAPTER XXVI

'ΕΘΙΣΜΩ

PERHAPS I may be pardoned for putting a Greek word at the head of this chapter, a word which Aristotle employed in the discussion of the problem with which we are now concerned. He was the "master of those who know." He laid the foundations of our European culture, and there is hardly a branch of knowledge which he did not either open or enlarge. Physics, metaphysics, ethics, politics, this great mind embraced; and in the treatment of the moral life he made some observations and some suggestions which are of vital importance even now, after centuries of Christian teaching. One thing he said about habit and the formation of habits, which leads us into the whole practice of life. "Habituation" is the only way of rendering the word in English; but in its English form we miss the connection between *ethismos* and *ethics*, which was in Aristotle's mind. The long *e* in ethics represented to him the strengthening of the short *e* in ethismos. Morals are built up on habits. The constant repetition of an act forms a habit; the combination of habits constitutes a character. *Δίκαιοι γιγνόμεθα δίκαια πράττοντες.* We become righteous by doing righteous deeds. Here is a truth which is not the whole truth, and yet it is of such moment that in the light of the whole truth it assumes even a greater importance. Christian thought has led us to question that half truth, that we become good by doing good actions, because from the point of view which Christ has given us an action is not good until it is done with a right motive, until the agent is himself good. Speaking in the strictest sense it is being good, having the right motive, acting with a pure intent, showing

the good spirit, which makes an action good. And actions which are formally correct, however frequently repeated, done without the spirit, or from a wrong motive, are not in the Christian sense good. For instance, a man may give alms systematically, and actually help the needy materially; but if his object is to gain political support, nay, even if his object is to gain merit and to save his own soul, we do not, because Christ would not, call the action good. Christ has set the Pharisees of His time before us as a perpetual example of men who were always doing good actions without becoming good. So far Aristotle's dictum is subject to correction.

But yet it was true then, and must always be, that by constantly and scrupulously doing things which are intrinsically right, forming a habit of right action, any one would be in the way of becoming right: he would in all probability catch the spirit of it, the right actions would tend to create the right motive. This would be particularly true if the actions illustrated some fundamental virtue, such as truth or compassion. If anyone were led, even from mixed motives, to be true and to speak truth, if he were constantly exhibiting a genuine sincerity and taking the consequences, often painful, of being absolutely true, the habit of truthfulness would grow upon him, and he would be (as many English boys are) incapable of a lie or of a subterfuge. Still more perhaps if anyone set himself to relieve distress, and to feel with those that are suffering, a habit of compassion and helpfulness would form, until the effort to help would become almost instinctive. And the formation of even two fundamental habits, such as truth and compassion, would make a character not perhaps perfect, but certainly good. Truth for truth's sake, and pity for pity's sake, would be intrinsically good. This man would, in Aristotle's sense, have become good by doing good.

But when we move into the Christian atmosphere and consider a morality which is entirely tested by the motive or the spirit, the formation of habits becomes more important, more effective. For here is our one dominant motive—to become Christlike. That will in any case direct and impel, or restrain and forbid, all the actions of the day and night.

Now, with this master-thought in the mind we set to work forming habits, doing what He would do, or what we are convinced He would wish us to do, acting, as far as we can tell, in His spirit. This habituation, this doing Christlike things in a Christlike spirit, doing them until they become habitual and even instinctive, this is a great element, nay, even the greatest, in achieving the end which we have in view.

We will examine seven of the habits which go to make up the Christlike character, and observe how these habits are formed by deliberate and consistent practice. These primary habits happen to be seven, as there happen to be seven deadly sins and seven virtues, cardinal and evangelic. Whether this is a mere accident or not, there is great convenience in it: we live in weeks, and by giving one of the seven habits to each day we may make more progress, developing the seven concurrently, and avoiding the one-sidedness which spoils some religious lives. There was a story of Benjamin Franklin in his strenuous self-culture making a list of twelve virtues, and practising one each month of the year. But after some years' trial of his method he found that he had omitted the virtue of humility, and that omission had vitiated all the rest, because as he made some progress in his twelve virtues he grew proud of himself. His self-satisfaction was ruining his character.

But these habits determined by the desire to be Christlike are not likely to leave out humility, or anything else which is essential to a true character. We are taken down to the springs of a good life, we are corrected and completed by the fact that there is a Person before us, a character, and it is always He Himself that we desire to be like, and not merely His qualities that we would imitate, or His commands that we would obey.

Now let us survey the seven Christlike habits.

1. The first is prayer, and we may add Bible study. By example and precept He bade us pray always and never faint. And by His own practice and use of the Scriptures he enforced the value of the Book, which is completed by the inclusion of His own life, and the results of His mission and presence in the world even to the end of the days. Here,

then, is a twofold habit which we have to form, prayer and the study of Scripture. The habit once formed is not easily broken ; but once broken it goes to pieces with an appalling rapidity ; which suggests that it is not merely a picturesque figure which represents the enemy of our souls watching us and trying to prevent us from prayer and reading of the Bible.

All kinds of powers combine to keep us from systematic prayer : the pressure of the day, the sceptical thought about the value of prayer, the difficulty of fixing and keeping attention, the battle it involves, apart altogether from the arguments and ridicule of others. And in our day the forces which prevent Bible study are a combination of new and old tendencies, which it requires great determination to resist. Criticism, which really makes the Bible a new book, far more spiritual and more authoritative, is cited as a reason for throwing the Bible aside. How shall I know now what is true in it or not ? And that is a reason for neglecting it altogether. It might be pertinent to say : How without the Bible can you know that Christ is true, or what He is ? How without this study can you find what it is to be Christlike ? How do you propose to pray always, i.e. to continue in prayer, without the book which, whatever else it is, is the most perfect manual of prayer and incentive to prayer that we possess ?

Study your Bible then daily at all costs. More than you can ever guess depends on it ; more disasters than you can ever realise result from neglecting it. How would any man, for instance, ever succumb to that vice which is desolating the world to-day if he had become familiar with Proverbs vii. and ix. ? " These are they that testify of me," said Christ. No one can hope to know Him or to walk in His footsteps without this aid.

And it is vital to form habits of prayer ; not to pray by rote, or to say so many stated prayers a day, but to find out what real prayer is, and then to practise that, until it becomes a habit, an instinctive motion of the mind. Prayer is that seeking of God, until you become conscious that He is seeking you, and that moment (sometimes it is only a moment) in which you and He meet, and you know

it. By daily, regular prayer, that habit, not of praying, but of meeting with God in prayer, can be formed, so that He is never "so far off as even to be near," so that the ejaculatory prayer in a moment of pause, or a crisis of need, finds Him at hand. "Pray without ceasing" is an impossible command, if by praying is understood the recitation of prayers. But it is not impossible if by prayer is meant what, strange to say, the New Testament word for prayer (προσευχή) means, the habitual direction of the whole personality in an aspiration Godwards. That relation can be maintained, day and night, consciously in the moments of set prayer, but subconsciously when the mind is occupied with other things.

This is the Christlike habit which we should seek to form as the fundamental condition of becoming Christlike.

Did not your parents try to form this habit in you while you were a child at the knee? Did not they teach you simple prayers to say, so that by praying you may learn to pray? And even if your parents and teachers neglected this initial teaching which might set you on the right way, has not some instinct within you, combining with circumstances from without, *driven* you at times to pray, and suggested to you that what in an hour of need is so natural, might as a formed habit be the greatest influence in forming your character? One who has learnt to pray and to handle his Bible is in the way of all progress and blessing. Without prayer and the Bible it is indeed hard to find the way.

2. The habit of worship is far more important than at first sight appears. For worship, if it is to be real, is not an occasional, but a constant, act. It is an attitude of the soul which has to be maintained against innumerable distractions. The main objection to church-going is that it tends to substitute certain stated acts of worship for the worship which should be habitual. On the other hand, apart from those stated acts and the constant reminders, it is very difficult to sustain the spirit of worship. Thus Jesus, Who might seem to be always worshipping, was scrupulous in attending the place of worship. He went,

we are told, *as His custom was,*[1] to the synagogue on the sabbath day. And from His boyhood upwards He frequented the Temple on every opportunity. It is therefore a great point in the struggle to be Christlike not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; that custom of stated worship, though no substitute for, is a very necessary aid to, the worship which God is ever seeking for. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him." Worship is the response of the soul to God, the only right attitude of man to his Creator. Those who know not how to worship, who have forgotten and neglected this constant duty and necessity of our nature, are undergoing a subtle process of degeneration; they are drifting away from the source and spring of their life, falling back on their origin in the earth instead of aspiring to the Author of their being, their Father, their God.

Worship may be formal and lifeless; forms of worship and heartlessness in it may even kill worship. In that case empty churches may be an evidence of pilgrims gone in quest of God elsewhere, of hearts seeking a truer way of worship, a real, as distinguished from a traditional, approach to Him.

But the one thing to remember is, that if we cannot find worship in a Church, if the Church's ceremonies and sacraments and devotions have lost their hold, there remains the necessity of finding and maintaining better habits of worship. That is difficult to do. Worship in nature is fitful; worship in solitude is very limited; worship without forms lapses into wandering reverie.

On the whole our common sense will approve and imitate the way of Jesus, Who "went, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day."

3. But the habit of doing good is, as it were, the other side of worship. Without it even the most fervent expressions of devotion remain unacceptable to God. The Priest and the Levite were on their way, no doubt, to some religious service, but the Samaritan saw the stripped and wounded man and helped him. "Go thou and do likewise," said the Master. That is the worship which counted in His

[1] Luke iv. 16.

eyes. In the vision of the sheep and the goats He shows how He reckons all human life by the service rendered to the suffering and the needy.

Here the formation of a habit is indispensable. By repeated acts of mercy we must become accustomed to be merciful, so that to reach out the helping hand is instinctive, so that the eye sees almost mechanically the sufferers by the wayside. There are some men and perhaps more women, who have by constant practice become habitual good Samaritans. Their lives, not in occasional deeds of relief or assistance, but in the settled plan and the constant practice, are a ministry of help and healing and blessing to all that need. These move through life like the Lady with the Lamp in the hospital at Scutari. Their shadow falling on the sick comforts them; the hem of their garment heals them. All their plans and designs in life are to help. Even those who are met casually experience good; but the steady purpose is blessing and saving untold numbers. St. Vincent de Paul made it a rule of life to be always looking for the Christ in every man he saw or met. When that is a master-thought in anyone, in that person all men see Christ.

4. But another habit is formed by noticing Christ's life and listening to His commandment. It is suggested by the last words of St. Matthew. When those first disciples reviewed the Master's activity among them, and they tried to sum up its practical bearings, it seemed to them that from beyond the grave He was saying to them "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." They felt the impulse; they lifted up their eyes to expanding horizons; they must go to the regions beyond. This habit of mind was formed in them, to conceive the world as one, the human race as one, and Christ as meant for all. And to this day those who would be Christlike get into this habit of mind. They feel the solidarity of the human race as one, and Christ as meant for all. And to this day those who would be Christlike get into this habit of mind. They feel the solidarity of the human race, and middle walls of partition disappear. They may be intensely patriotic, and may think that no country is so dear as their own; but

that does not prevent them from loving the other countries and the other races, or from longing to bring them together in Christ. The habit of mind is confirmed by the study of the other races, by the discovery of their lovableness, by the gradual recognition of the universal need for Christ, and of Christ's power to meet the need of all.

The constant records of Christ's widening reign, as island after island and continent after continent comes under His sway, makes the habit of mind a glowing enthusiasm—an "enthusiasm of humanity," as Professor Seeley called it. That was, as he says in *Ecce Homo*, the peculiar gist of Christ's teaching and example, a "third kind of love, not of the race nor of the individual, but of the race *in* the individual . . . the love not of all men nor yet of every man, but of the *man* in every man." [1] And the habit becomes so steady and commanding that at last the interest in preaching Christ to the nations, and the longing for the promised consummation when all things will be gathered together in Him, seem to form the very reason for life, the object of living. Everything falls into line and ranges itself under that key-thought: for me to live is Christ.

5. And yet there is another habit to be formed by all who would really walk in the footprints of Christ; it is the habit of speaking about Christ, and seeking to bring individuals, in conversation and daily intercourse, to know Him and believe in Him. Only when this is habitual does it cease to be offensive. So long as it is an effort, a constraint, an almost desperate attempt to speak to others and to win them for Christ, it may easily seem impertinent, intrusive, and even pharisaical. But when the habitual attitude of the mind is one of intense interest in all we meet, and of an inward yearning over them that they may all be in Christ, there is a sweet and gracious atmosphere which emanates from this Christlike mind. It is attractive, strangely attractive, and people are unconsciously drawn, not so much to the person in whom it is exhibited, as to Christ Who is the subject of it. Fishers of men! What an insight the term gives into Christ's thought! We are

[1] *Ecce Homo*, ch. xiii.

all called to take part in His divine fishery, to gather men in to Him. Skill is needed, exquisite tact—in vain is the net spread in sight of any bird. Direct and rude approaches are likely to frustrate the end in view. But here are you in the world, as Christ was in the world, to speak to men and women as He spoke to the Ruler who came to Him by night, or to the woman at the well, or to the children whom He gathered in His arms. Here are you in the world to win it.

The habit grows upon you; the unconscious self in you is ever confirming it. At last it tells without any conscious exertion of the will. Moses wist not that his face shone. Those who are winning others to Christ most effectively and most constantly, seem almost to have forgotten that that was their object. It is only that they love people for Christ's sake, and then for their own. It is only that their love for Christ passes on to other people through their love for them.

This habit is in most of us very slow to form, and sometimes it only reaches a true consistency in the closing years, when the gate is about to open.

6. There is the habit of forgiving. What a sublime truth was hidden in Heine's flippant remark, that God would forgive him: *c'est son métier*! It is the very nature of God to forgive. Our nature is very much the opposite. Resentment and revenge come to us as easily as indiarubber rebounds. But Christ meant to establish in us the habit of forgiving by engraining on our conscience the prayer: Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

It may become a habit. Provocation may cease to provoke. Injury may lose all suggestion of retaliation. Nay, the grossest offence, injustice, libel, slander or insult, may come to seem primarily a fresh opportunity to forgive.

7. There is the habit of giving. To his friend, Carlyle gave as his last message, eagerly asked for: "Give yourself loyally." Give yourself and you give your money or your goods as an inevitable consequence. That giving, for one who has dwelt much on Christ and pressed hard on his footprints, may become instinctive. His self-giving was

so complete, His conviction that it is more blessed to give than to receive was so confident, His joy ever growing in His gifts until it seemed to reach a climax under the shadow of the Cross; all this makes giving a desire and a delight—getting presently seems only a condition of giving. Give, not much, not a little, but more and ever more; nay, give all.

Now these seven habits form a character, a Christlike character. They are not likely to be formed without the strong motive of devotion to Christ. But if conceivably they could be formed in the Aristotelean sense, of doing just things and so becoming just, they would certainly stir in the mind the true motive. These are habits of life which are bound up with Christ as motive and object.

Let anyone set to work to form one or other of these habits and he will find himself coming to Christ; let anyone form them all, and he will find, as Paul did: It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me.

CHAPTER XXVII

ASSOCIATION

It was one of Aristotle's sayings which has passed into the common stock of thought, that to live alone one must be a wild animal or a god (ἢ θήριον ἢ θεός). For man is a social creature (ζῷον πολίτικον), and a solitary human being, if it were possible, would not be a man. But, indeed, when the philosopher said that isolation was the mark of a beast or a god, he did not take into account that wild beasts are more or less gregarious, nor did he know that God is not alone; as a philosopher he probably rejected the innumerable divinities of Polytheism; but he had not conceived what Christianity has made familiar to us, that the One God is a Trinity. A distinguished preacher of our time has argued for the social view of human life from this social element in the Godhead. That is perhaps too daring a comparison of small things with great. But we may correct Aristotle's dictum by saying that to live alone is no mark of a god, if by God we mean the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; for He is, in His intrinsic nature, love, and love implies not only self but otherness; it is necessarily a relation, a reciprocity: God in His very nature as Love must be a relation—Father, Son, Holy Spirit—not a solitary individual. And by His very nature He creates objects to love and be loved by, so that His whole being and activity imply society.

Man, then, is a social being by virtue of his kinship with God. Solitude, isolation, is *contra naturam*, against his nature. Thus, when ideal man came, it implied an individualism of a personal life, in a sense the birth of the personality, but it also implied a society, a socialism, a good in widest commonalty spread. Christianity, in a word,

meant an ideal society; a Christian would be one in ideal and necessary relation with his fellow-men. An anchorite might withdraw into the desert, to escape from the overflowing corruption of the times, and he might draw the crowds to him by his abnegation, as St. Anthony and the hermits of the Thebaid did, but that was exceptional and occasional. The Christian ideal was far other. Salt in the body of humanity, a light set upon a hill which could not be hid, this was the way in which Christ depicted His followers. A society, a brotherhood, pervaded by a great philanthropy, the love of man to man, a mutual service, the life of each complementary to the rest, a body with many members united in the one Head, which was Christ, this was the way in which the kingdom of Heaven was to come upon earth.

Instinctively those who had found Christ, or had been found by Him, drew together into a compact organism of mutual service and common help to the rest of mankind. That *κοινωνία*, as it was called, the communion, or fellowship one with another, became the secret of a new life in the world, the guarantee of personal acceptance with God, the opportunity of doing the will of God. "If we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another." The drawing apart is akin to the kingdom of darkness; the kingdom of light draws us together, makes us members one of another, shows us a life in which each individual is quickened into intense activity by being articulated in the whole, which is the body of Christ.

The Church is this community, which comes into being because of the longing to be Christlike, and in its development attempts to make the *milieu* in which Christlikeness can be realised, to offer the means of grace in aid of it, to act collectively on the world as Christ would, to be the instrument through which He acts.

The nature and purpose of the Church are therefore displayed in its origin; its intent is plain; and by realising that intent we have a criterion by which we can discover where it has swerved or declined or degenerated.

The true Church is best defined not by general and vague terms, such as Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, but by some

perfectly plain and simple test. The Church is a society in which the members are Christlike or becoming Christlike, a society, therefore, which is bringing the whole of human society to that divine likeness. The terms used to define the Church do not fit; they prevent us from seeing what the Church is, they include in the idea of the Church much which is absolutely unchristlike. At length, the Church so defined, gone so far astray from the original intention, becomes suspect, is deserted, rejected, derided by men. The remedy is not to give up the Church, but to give up the misleading definition, and to go back to the real meaning and intention of the Church. We should do well to grasp the truth, with our eyes on all that Christ was, on all that He did, and all that He taught, that we cannot be His followers in isolation, we must be in a community; we can follow Him only by being in fellowship with Him, and that involves being in fellowship with all who follow Him. This lays upon all who would be Christlike a twofold obligation; they must unite themselves with a concrete, actual community of Christ's followers, for the practical purpose of mutual instruction and discipline, and of common action in carrying out Christ's ideas in the world; and they must keep ever present in thought, in love, and prayer, the society of Christ's followers at present existing in the world, united with the great company of those who have passed within the veil. They must be at once congregational and catholic. It is the balancing of these two requirements which makes the recognisable likeness of Christ: not congregationalism alone, which may easily become narrow, sectional, sectarian, and ultimately a withered branch which bears no fruit; but not catholicism alone, which may easily become either an abstract idea which has little bearing on life and conduct, or a perilous tyranny of an ecclesiastical organisation, crushing the individual into a prescribed form, imposing on all thought and progress the will of what is called the Church, but what is really the limited and often obscurantist ideas of those who have got into the place of power. If we would in the right association with others seek to carry out the ideal of Christlikeness, we must look at the two requirements

separately, and seek to bring them together in a harmonious agreement.

First, then, there must be a congregational life. Those who believe in Christ and desire to serve Him must come together for mutual counsel and common action. "Then they that feared the Lord spake one with another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."[1] That is the prophetic anticipation of the Church on the last page of the Old Testament. That congregation of faithful men, as the Article defines the Church, is the condition of all effective Christian life. In the congregation the Word of God is preached, in the congregation the sacraments are duly administered. There prayer is wont to be made. There in council members find what is to be done for Christ's cause. There they exercise a saving influence on one another, and settle under the guidance of the Spirit whose sins are to be forgiven, whose to be retained. In the congregation the young are trained, confirmed, built up. In the congregation Christ manifests Himself and gives His directions, according to His explicit promise.[2] In this congregational life the Christian character is formed and the Christian gifts or charismata are exercised. The congregation as a whole exercises an influence, on the locality, on the country, on the world; and through the congregation the individual is making his, or her, contribution to the working of Christ in the world; but meanwhile the individual is being formed and trained by his congregational life, and by virtue of it becomes a power for truth and righteousness, a power for winning others to Christ, in his ordinary course of life.

This congregational side of the Church is at present largely neglected and forgotten, with very disastrous consequences. People excuse themselves from entering into it, on the plea of the imperfections and faults of church-members. But they find nothing to take its place; they miss their

[1] Mal. iii. 16–17. [2] Matt. xviii. 15–20.

part of the Christian service which the Church is rendering, and they miss the discipline and training in their own personal life and character which the Church can give.

The weakened influence of the Church in the country is due to the decay of the congregational life. We will not follow Christ even in His promise: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst."

This aid to Christlikeness must not then be neglected. Your inward life will decline, and your influence for good will be largely destroyed; in spite of all inward resolutions to follow Christ and to obey Him, you will find that you are not doing so, and are even frustrating His work, unless you face the responsibility of being in real and practical association with other Christians, unless you receive the aids and reminders, unless in some measure you give to others such aids and reminders, which are only possible in a genuine community. Christianity is a communal life; it can neither be self-centred nor vaguely dispersed; Christlikeness means a close and constant relation with men, a mutual help, a profound interest in one another, a recognition of Christ in all and of all in Christ, a steady and consistent effort to be members of His body, in vital relation with the Head, and a ministry to one another which follows on His example: "If I then, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." [1]

It was this recognition of an essential element of Christlikeness which led to the cœnobite movement in the Church, the common life of monasteries and convents. Considering what that monastic life has done for the world, in cultivating habits of prayer, in promoting letters (the Benedictines), in ministering to the poor (Cistercians, Franciscans, Poor Clares), in preaching the gospel (the Dominicans and the Jesuits), we hesitate to criticise it. The ideal of sacrifice and service was so lofty, the devotion of monks and nuns has been so superhuman, that in spite of all the abuses that have crept into monastic institutions, mankind still bows with reverence before those who attempt that kind of

[1] John xiii. 14.

Christianity. And indeed the monastic ideal is again attracting the world-weary spirits of our time. There are more monastic establishments in England than there were before the Reformation.

But this relapse into monasticism, the result of world-weariness and pessimism, is only temporary. The cœnobitism to which Christ calls us, and which commends itself to those who are bent on following Him to-day, is the same in intention, but different in method. Monasticism left out the Creator's conception of men and women complementing each other, man and wife as one flesh, the very condition of the continuance of the race. It treated the sex-relation as the work of another hand than God's; and in its profound pessimism it took the course which, if all followed it, would bring the world to an end. A religious theory which discredits the very principle on which all human life depends must be lopsided.

What is wanted in the world is the salvation and sanctification of human life as it has to be lived, in the family, in business, in the ordinary activities and pleasures which engage human beings. The life together which Christ demanded of His followers must therefore be that which He himself indicated, when He lived in the home at Nazareth and worked in the carpenter's shop; when He came out into life and mingled freely with men of all kinds; when He attended the marriage feast or sat at the table with the Pharisee, when He braved the charge of being a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber; when He took the little children in His arms and set a child in the midst to be an example of the Kingdom of Heaven. He did not want to distinguish the religious from the secular, to have an order of "religious" while the rest were left in "the world." He wanted the secular to be religious, the kingdoms of this world to become His. He wished His Church therefore to be a congregation of human beings engaged in the avocations of this present life, but drawn together, rich and poor, young or old, in the community of mutual help and love and united service for the world.

All that is good and Christian in the monastic life should be taken over and realised in the Christian congregation. We should all join the society of Christ. The name Society

of Jesus has been misleading; nothing could be further from the character and example of Jesus than the Society of Ignatius Loyola. The Church which depends on Jesus and is made by His presence in the midst, must in moral influence and redemptive working be widely different from the Church which depends on Ignatius Loyola and what is called the Society of Jesus.

And yet there is a catholicism which must be embraced and maintained by every Christian who aspires to be Christ-like. We are necessarily united with a congregation, a body large or small of those who are trying in unity to serve Christ. But that body is only a microcosm of the whole Church; in it, as in a dew-drop, the whole circle of the heavens and the central sun is reflected, not as if it were or could be the whole, but as if in this close and particular way the whole in its vast extent and significance could be brought near and made real to the individual. In this way catholicism is necessary to congregationalism. The life of each Christian is maintained by a conscious, imaginative, and even mystical communion with all. These individuals with whom you are in visible and personal contact stand for the whole company of those who believe. In a visible sense your fellowship can only be with a few score, a few hundreds at most. But in a spiritual, that is, in the real sense, it is with the uncounted multitude which makes the Body of Christ. There is one body, as there is one Head. There is one God, and one Lord Jesus Christ, and one Spirit. We are not divided, all one body we. In the physical and visible sense we cannot but be divided. Only with few can we be in real contact, on the plane of the senses, in actual and conscious intercourse. The church in the next town, or even the next parish, is beyond this immediate personal touch; still more the church across the channel, or the church across the ocean; still more the church across the river, the church behind the hills of death, from which the songs of triumph come but faintly to our ears. But in the spirit, in the actual consciousness of the spiritual life, the communion is maintained with the uncounted host; all who call upon the name of Christ, their Lord and ours, live in the fellowship. Invisible communications maintain

the connections. Just as Paul and the other Apostles are always with us in their writings, so all the others who have written books or hymns, or left words echoing in the world, are always with us. Just as those first believers of whom we read in the New Testament are always with us, yielding to us their experiences of joy and sorrow, of temptation and fo victory, so those who are alive now in every part of the world are with us. We are united with one another in Christ. The One Spirit makes us one body. We minister to one another by a telepathy which only now begins to be understood. We strengthen each other's faith, we build up each other's lives. And this catholicism is no accidental part of the Church life ; it is the essence of it. The Catholic Church is not made up of the congregations, but makes the congregations, and expresses its fullness, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, in these cells of the one body, in these monads of the whole spiritual cosmos. This catholicism is coming to its own in our day, toilsomely and with some difficulty, but very surely. It has had to struggle through and to throw aside very partial and restricted notions of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. It is still overshadowed and repressed by those imperfect notions. But its reality, its necessity, its obviousness, begin to be understood. The Roman conception of catholicism has played a great part in the world ; for eight centuries it succeeded, but then it broke down when the Eastern Church established a rival catholicism. With undaunted courage the great Hildebrand endeavoured to restore the old conception, and for four hundred years, though with significant cracks and rents in the system, catholicism in that external, mechanical sense was maintained. Then again it broke down. Luther and Calvin opened the way to a more feasible catholicism, in which we are now striving to walk. That impracticable catholicism is advocated now by Anglo-Catholics ; but the result is perplexing and confusing beyond imagination. It means that here in this small island are two Catholic Churches in the same sense of the word. The Anglo-Catholic Church is confident that it is the Catholic Church ; the Roman Catholic Church is equally confident of the contrary. But two Catholic

Churches are an absurdity; the conflict between them is unseemly and awakens scepticism about both the claims. But the Church is and must be always one. Catholicism means the whole, the unifying principle which holds together those who are scattered not only in locality, but in opinion and in forms, and even in credal expressions.

The partial catholicisms exist by excluding all that are not in their visible fold and obedience. It is the very essence of the Papal Church to exclude all that is not Papal. It would go to pieces at once if it allowed that Christ Himself, and not the Pope, is the unifying principle. And so with the Eastern Church and with the Anglican Church; the fundamental principle of these organisations is the unchurching of those who are not in them.

But catholicism includes, and does not exclude. It is the recognition of the one Church, of which Christ is the Head, composed of all who believe in Him, and embracing all organisations, however named, which are presenting Him to the world and carrying out His work.

A catholicism which finds no place in the Church for a Wesley or a Livingstone can never be really catholic. It excludes something which is really Christ's, while it includes much which is patently not.

The real Catholic is one, on the other hand, who, while necessarily belonging to a particular society or group, in which he worships and carries on his work for Christ, steadily and absolutely refuses to exclude from his heart and sympathy any of those who are truly Christ's. As he sings hymns of St. Bernard, of Newman, of Faber, side by side with hymns of Watts or Wesley or Doddridge or Lyte or How, so he insists on joining the vast invisible company of the worshipping Church, and will hear nothing of excluding any on the ground of different names or different formulæ or different modes of worship.

Such catholicism is worth striving for and living in. For it has an immense effect upon the soul's life. On the other hand, the old impracticable catholicisms are the cause, once of persecution and still of exclusiveness and sectarianism. As all the past of time reveals, those who are trying to establish among us the Papal Catholicism are only pre-

paring for the future a new disruption. For while association is necessary to the spiritual life, freedom is not less necessary.

And in the long run Christians will insist on standing fast in the liberty with which Christ has made them free.

CHAPTER XXVIII

MYSTICISM

VAUGHAN'S *Half-hours with the Mystics* led us to think and speak of the mystics as a class. But that is somewhat misleading. If the book had been called "Half-hours of mysticism," that would have pointed us more correctly to the truth. The Oxford *Book of Mystical Verse* shows how little the writers of such verse can be classed together on any other ground than that they have written verse which justifies the distinctive epithet. Here is Richard Rolle, but here also is Algernon Charles Swinburne. Here is William Blake, but here also is Walt Whitman. Here is Francis Thompson, but here also is Henley. It would not occur to us to call Swinburne a mystic—Swinburne, who was in wild revolt against Christianity and required that he should be buried without religious rites. Yet he had his mystical moments. Walt Whitman, too, would seem to be matter-of-fact, prosaic, democratic, non-religious, rather than mystical. To describe him as a mystic would seem quite beside the mark. And yet a great deal of his poetry may come under the designation "mystical." As for Henley, he seemed the most impetuous, violent, sceptical of men, in revolt against religion and life, and even his own best friend. But in him also was the mystical note. The fact is, Mysticism is a term, borrowed from the ancient Mystery religions, to describe certain experiences of the soul which occur in all religions and non-religions, and in men and women of all kinds. Sometimes it is an isolated experience in a whole life, like that of James Russell Lowell, described in William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*.[1] Sometimes it is a succession of such experiences which colours a whole

[1] P. 66.

life, like Bœhmen's, and then we call the subject of such experiences a mystic.

Mysticism may be Christian, but it may be non-Christian or even anti-Christian. Mr. Claud Field has a book on the mystics of Islam. Some of the sufis are hardly distinguishable from Christian mystics.—Hasan Basri, Rabai the woman sufi, Ibrahim ben Adham, Fudhayl ben Azaz, Bayazid Bastami Zu'n of Egypt, Mansur Hallay, Habib Ajami, Avicenna, and supreme above them all, Al Ghazzali (A.D. 1058–1111), and many more, are strange names to Western ears; but in them is the authentic mystical experience, occurring age after age. The experience may be even anti-Christian, as in the case of Devendranath Tagore, who was vehemently opposed to Christianity and yet felt that the truths of the Brâhma Dharma were conveyed to him by direct contact with God:—

"Who inspired me with these truths? He who again and again inspires us with intelligence in the paths of religion, worldly prosperity, desire, and salvation, that living Spirit Himself inspired my heart with these truths. They are not the conclusions of my weak intellect nor the ravings of a deluded or wandering mind. They are God-sent truths that gushed from my heart. These living truths have descended on my heart from Him who is the Life of Truth, the Light of Truth. Then did I come to know Him. I came to know that he who seeks Him finds Him. It was by dint of longing alone that I was enabled to gain the dust of His feet; and that dust became the ointment of my eyes." [1]

Sadly Devendranath had to acknowledge that he could not make either Vedas or Upanishads the foundation of his religion. He thought he could, but found, the more he studied that ancient religious literature, the limitations and the errors. His strong national prejudice prevented him from turning to the Scriptures or to Christ, though later he adopted Fénelon's great prayer as part of the worship of the Brahmo-Somaj.[2]

[1] *The Autobiography of Devendranath Tagore*, with introduction by Evelyn Underhill, pp. 169–70. (Macmillan & Co., 1916.)
[2] Ibid., p. 178.

But he sought and found in the mystic way the assurance of his religious life. And this leads us to a definition of mysticism as "the immediate experience of God as a transcendent and immanent Being."

The mystical moments in the lives of men are those, be they few or many—an isolated experience or a constant repetition of such experiences—in which the reality of God is put beyond all question and some authentic and indubitable word of God comes to the soul.

One would almost venture on the assertion that every human being has once or twice in life a mystical moment. John Masefield describes in his *Everlasting Mercy* such a moment coming to a coarse village clown. Such an inrush of the Divine comes, we surmise, to everyone, in childhood, in adolescence, in some sharp experience of the joy or the sorrow of life, in the approach of death. We cannot of course be sure; for very few human beings ever disclose the secrets of the inner life. But amazing facts often come to light, showing that the most godless, the most degraded, the most deliberately criminal and vicious of human beings have had their moments of revelation, often thrust aside, forgotten, denied, derided, but yet quite authentic, when the veil between the soul and God became quite thin, and even diaphanous.

The mystics are only those who respond to these experiences, follow them up, and seek to make them habitual. It is a matter not of destiny but of choice. And so such characters are formed as Tauler, Richard Rolle, Saint Teresa, the Lady Julian of Norwich, Jacob Bœhmen, William Law. These are they who have followed the gleam, have recognised that those glimpses of God are of more value than all the treasures of the world, and have made it the solid business of life to maintain a constant communion with God.

These, and many others, have written their experiences and so have enabled many to share them. But there are myriads of non-writing, and even illiterate, mystics. Mysticism, then, is not as such distinctively Christian. God is not far from any one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being. And the right conception is that given in Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*, though we

may object to the metaphor employed. God is everywhere and always pressing on every soul that He has made, soliciting but never forcing an entrance. The infidel lecturer or writer, the desperate criminal, the debauchee, sunk in the foul mire of his vices, are all equally surrounded and assailed by the loving, merciful and redeeming God. They shut Him out, they drown His voice, they argue themselves into denials and disproofs. But there is the simple fact; they are beset with God; they could respond to Him, they could open to Him, and immediately He would be within them, and ready to take possession.

But the mystic experience assumes a marvellous reality, definiteness, and even permanence, in Christ. As the aid to Christlikeness it is of incalculable value. It is produced by faith in Christ. The mysticism of Paul or John is the effect of believing in Him. The vision on the way to Damascus was the beginning of a process which continued until Paul could say, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me." The mystic life became constant; it was a life hidden with Christ in God. The mysticism of St. John's fifteenth chapter is the most simply stated and yet the most profound of any that we know. Indeed, the whole Gospel is an essay in mysticism. Under several images, of light, of water, of a tree, the same essential fact is brought out. This disciple has become a child of God, by faith in Christ, born again, so assimilated to Christ that it is as if he ate Christ's flesh and drank His blood, so inspired by Him that it is as if a fountain of living waters were opened within him, so identified with Him that he is as the branch of the Vine that bears fruit not his own but the Vine's.

Thus, as the mystical life is produced within by the faith in Christ, it becomes an active and ever-working principle within to produce likeness to Christ. Mysticism in the broad sense is found everywhere, in all kinds of men, in all religions, and even in non-religions. But mysticism in the particular Christian sense is a potent instrument put within our reach for realising the Christian life. There are no doubt Christians of a plain, matter-of-fact type, who seem complete strangers to the mystic experience. We

would not therefore identify Christianity with mysticism. But we may say that the mystical experience is so much a product of Christ, and works with such effect to make Christlikeness possible, that we should all desire such an experience, and do all in our power to gain and to keep it.

It may help us now to compare a mystical experience that is not distinctively Christian with one that is distinctively Christian. It may set us on the track of moving from the more general to the more particular. Wordsworth, in the "Lines composed above Tintern Abbey," gives a glimpse of a mystical moment which, beautiful as it is from the poetical point of view, is even more beautiful when it is recognised as an actual and veracious description of what he had felt :—

> And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.

God is not named. Nevertheless He is described. The poet feels the creative power making the whole visible scene of Nature, the beauty of it, the harmony of it, dwelling in the human mind, producing at once the thought and the object of thought, and uniting them in one great whole.

It is a mystical experience which comes to more and more minds as time rolls on and as more attention is paid to the wonders of the universe in which we live. The thinking mind has an intuition of the whole, the cause of the whole, even the meaning of the whole. It recognises itself as capable of discovering and noting the vast harmonious scheme, the world and its origin, man and his purpose. It is what Clifford called Cosmic Emotion, what that brilliant sceptic believed would ultimately take the place of religion. But obviously it is religion. It does not profess to know or to name God, but it recognises that to which the name God has been given. The name for God in the Old Testa-

ment is a plural word, Elohim, indicating not gods many, but a Being whom man hesitated to describe by a singular word, as if He were only one like ourselves, one of many. The significance of the Hebrew word Elohim is given in that passage of Wordsworth, as it is in the first chapter of Genesis or in the nineteenth or hundred and thirty-ninth psalm, or in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah.

The Being that rolls through all things, the motion and the Spirit that makes us thinking things and all the objects of our thought—with this Being we at times come into direct and conscious contact. We see no form, we hear no voice. We are not conscious of One Who sits above or stands apart from the universe and the creatures He has made. But we are conscious of the Power that made us, the Power that works in us; some call it creative evolution, others call it God. This mysticism, which has not yet acquired a distinctive Christian character, is real and in a sense universal; it is found not only in poets, the hymns of the Vedas, the poems of Virgil, Dante, Goethe, Shakespeare, but also in ordinary men everywhere and always, who know nothing of poetry and have no idea of literature. Common people, who have no words in which to record their experience, are yet conscious of just what Wordsworth felt so deeply and expressed so well. They, too, are suddenly affected by the beauty of a sunset, by the sight of the round ocean, as of the blue sky; they are touched with solemn thought. They, too, become aware of themselves as thinking beings, and have a glimpse of the implication. They, too, are suddenly moved by the pathos of things, birth and death, the fall from greatness to obscurity, the passing show of kingdoms and empires.

But this mysticism which has not attained to Christianity is apt to be not only transient, but devoid of practical result. It may be, as in Swinburne, without moral effect on life or conduct. It may mean only a passing recognition of a spiritual world into which one does not enter, or even declines to enter. Thus mysticism has often fallen into disrepute as insubstantial, unethical, the stuff that dreams are made of.

Contrast with this the mysticism which is distinctively Christian, that which we are now discussing as an aid to

the attainment of Christlikeness. This kind of mysticism is a relation with Christ, Who is a very definite Person, intensely ethical and actively engaged in saving the world, and establishing the Kingdom of God upon earth. While mysticism is only Pantheistic, producing a sense of the hidden origin and principle of things, it may lead to an obliteration of moral distinction and may encourage a passive attitude to the universe, leaving the will unmoved. But a mysticism which means a close and vivid relation with Christ must by the very nature of Christ work out in moral values, must by the very nature of Christ's activity in the world engage the subject of it to an eager and constant effort to save the world.

There does not therefore lie against Christian mysticism the charge which may be made against mysticism as such, viz. that it is unethical and unpractical. The Christian mystic, on the contrary, is bound over to a holy life, in union with Christ, and is called to active service in bringing the world to Christ. In the first chapter of Ephesians St. Paul prays that God would give to the readers of the epistle a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. The wisdom is just the ordinary rational conviction of Christ's existence, life on earth, teaching, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, the acceptance of the objective fact of Christ. But the *revelation* is something more; it is that personal experience of Christ which we call mystical—Christ as a living, bright reality in close personal relation to the soul, Christ as an object of love which is the spring of all goodness, not merely the escape from sin but the positive life of Christlikeness.

We may take then as an expression of Christian mysticism, to set over against Wordsworth's, which is not yet distinctively Christian, the familiar lines of Ray Palmer, which are sometimes sung in churches, but would be better sung in the closet—the lines given at the beginning of this book.[1]

This as poetry comes very far behind the lines of Wordsworth. But as the account of a mystical experience it passes far beyond the thought of the great poet. It shows how a Christian may have a sense of Christ's presence

[1] P. 31.

which produces an intense personal love to the Unseen Friend. It shows how faith leaves sight nothing to claim in point of certainty and effectiveness. It even reveals Christ as a living personal presence in the soul, able to control and direct every thought and every motion there. And it gives as the sanction and enforcement of this divine inward authority the confidence of the future: I shall see Thee as Thou art. Christian mysticism is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Seeing, then, that these practical effects follow from entering the way of this mysticism, it is very important that we should not think that the mystics form a separate class, that they are endowed with particular faculties, to which some of us may not aspire. Nay, it is certain that many of the poorest and humblest and least endowed of human beings have walked in the mystic way, and have enjoyed an assurance, a peace, a blessedness, as great as the inheritance of the greatest saints. And I will close this chapter with a pastoral experience such as every minister of Christ has frequently had.

I visited the other day an aged couple, the man over eighty and his wife not very far behind. They had lived together for many years and their children were all scattered. They are of that large company to whom the old age pension has made the whole difference, giving to the eventide of life a sense of serenity and independence. They occupied but one room. The woman was nearly blind and in constant pain. Neither of them could read anything but the largest print, and for the shortest time at once. But the single room was spotlessly clean, homelike, even beautiful. There was no murmur of complaint, no impatience, no anxiety. Both of these people had the constant sense of their Lord's presence, and the feeling that they could turn to Him at all times and refer to Him all their troubles and pains. There was a calm and peace in this dwelling in striking contrast with the tumultuous world outside, and it was easier to pray there than in some churches. The three gathered were conscious of Him who promised to be in the midst.

As I left the old man rose and took my hand; he was conscious, he said, that he was very near the end; but it was said in the tone of one who is just going to visit friends in some peculiarly pleasant place. The wife on her side was not perturbed, because she could not bear to think of dying first and leaving him forlorn and helpless. In the world of letters you inquire about mysticism from Miss Evelyn Underhill or Dean Inge. In the world of life you find it as the Treasure of the Humble.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE EVANGELIC VIRTUES

In the ante-chapel of New College, Oxford, is the window designed by Sir Joshua Reynolds representing the Nativity, and beneath the manger and the Holy Family the seven virtues, in the form of seven women's figures that are the triumph of the great painter's imagination and skill. Right and left are the four cardinal virtues, Temperance and Fortitude to the left, to the right Justice and Prudence; in the centre, just beneath the Infant Saviour, are the three evangelic virtues, as they have been called, Love in the midst, Faith on the left, and Hope on the right. Having the good fortune to be educated at New College, I have felt this western window of the ante-chapel as a shining presence all through my life. When the sinking sun shone through the window those exquisite forms stood out translucent, and the jewelled light penetrated beyond the high-built organ, into the recesses of the chapel, where is kept the crozier of William of Wykeham, the founder of the College. Those seven virtues came home to me as the perfection of beauty, sank into my heart as desirable beyond the love of women: the virtues honoured in antiquity, and called cardinal because they are the very hinges on which noble character turns, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance, and the three virtues which came with the gospel, which in a sense were the gospel, Faith and Hope and Love.

These three did not come into the world by Christ, but were picked out of the world by Christ, illustrated perfectly by His own life and character, and enjoined on all who would follow Him, not to supersede, but to complete, the four virtues of antiquity. Before Christ they were hardly

recognised as *virtues*; after Christ they were exalted as the supreme virtues, and the greatest of these was Love.

Looking into the character of Jesus we are conscious that it rested on those four cardinal virtues which men from a remote antiquity have approved.

In Him Prudence or Wisdom was so eminent that He was identified with the wisdom of the Book of Proverbs, and was described by Paul as Wisdom, and by John as the Word, which is the equivalent of the wisdom in the Proverbs. In Sir Joshua's design Prudence carries the arrow entwined with the serpent, the symbol in antiquity of wisdom. And when men heard Him speak they perceived that never man spake as He did. His words were wise in a sense in which few words of the philosophers are wise: they last, they are never out of date, they blossom afresh like the aloe, century after century, and reveal new beauties and wonders with every age. The Beatitudes, and indeed the whole Sermon on the Mount, express a wisdom which has gone to the heart of things and anticipated all the ethical discoveries of time. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesses"—there is the word of wisdom which is yet to redeem industry and save society. His invitation: "Come unto me, learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls," is fresh as on the day when it was uttered, has a meaning which only these late times have unveiled. A world distracted with war, and tormented by the fear of its recurrence, begins at last to see that its one hope lies in returning to Him, that rest is only to be found in meekness and lowliness of heart.

Thus His prudence, foresight, understanding, wisdom, are established increasingly as time goes on. We do not call Him a philosopher, because the term is inadequate; but He is first in the school of Athens, the one thinker who is never surpassed or superseded.

But equally manifest is His quality of Justice. Justice in Sir Joshua's picture stands against the background of luminous cloud. She holds the scales up before her face, and their shadow keeps her eyes from being dazzled. The sword rests by her side and the right hand rests gently on

the hilt; she is in no haste to use it. It is justice in this sense, justice which is compact of fairness and of mercy, the finer justice called Equity, that is exhibited in the character of Christ. He regards all people with an equal interest and concern. He does not honour the rich more than the poor; He is equally at ease in the presence of the great and of the small. Test Him in this way: in any case of disputed possession, would you not gladly and unhesitatingly leave the decision in His hands? His justice is manifest to all, though it is hidden in the flowers of the gentler virtues.

As for courage, the character of Jesus exhibits that heroic virtue in every particular, and in all the changing circumstances of His life. When did He quail? When did He betray fear? Who could terrify Him or browbeat Him? Who could by threats or violence cow the steady gaze of those calm eyes?

Alone with a scourge of cords He cleansed the Temple, and drove the vested interests huddling before Him. In the storm when the boat was sinking He was calm and unperturbed. He went up to Jerusalem, consciously to die, and in every phase of the trial and the execution He maintained a serenity which awed the beholders, from the judge to the executioner. The courage of the soldier is largely factitious; it is the result of the crowd, of public opinion, of the fear of shame. But the highest courage is that which rests on an inward principle, draws from inner resources, and remains unaffected by all the vicissitudes of circumstance. And we therefore can say with confidence: Jesus was the bravest man that ever lived.

Temperance means self-control. It did not in antiquity bear the restricted meaning which is commonly implied, though Sir Joshua so far accepted the restriction as to represent this virtue pouring water from her jug into the cup. But in the proper sense of the word, the control of passion or of appetite, Christ exhibited this virtue without any defect. He could feast with those who feast; He could produce the wine at the wedding; but He could not take too much, or suffer appetite to master Him. There is no instance in which His temper was provoked. His terrific denunciation of the Pharisees betrays no heat of

anger, but only the flashing light of truth. In perfect balance and self-control He passed along the way of life, even to the Cross, showing how one with the strongest passions, the deepest feelings, the most absorbing interests, may still be calm and self-possessed, moving with the serenity of a planet in its orbit.

The four cardinal virtues, then, are there in Him perfectly harmonised, forming the foundation of His human character. But to these He added these three other virtues, all His own in the sense that He first singled them out from human qualities and powers and sublimated them into the virtues which make a complete character, lifting it to heaven and connecting it with God.

In looking at each of these evangelic virtues, Faith, Hope and Love, it is to be noted that He perfectly exhibited them, that He enjoined them upon us, that He has the power, He alone, to enable us to exhibit them in any full and perfect sense. Taking first Faith, we see that He gave to the term a new meaning, He made it a virtue rather than a mere faculty of the soul. He did this by His own way of life and attitude of mind. He showed in Himself what faith is, so that men recognised it at once as one of the three highest virtues, and aspired to possess it as a supreme spiritual achievement. "Have faith in God," He said. "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed ye would say unto this mountain, Be rooted up and cast into the sea, and it would obey you." He acted on this Himself, and showed how it was not only a great power put into our hands, but a virtue, in a sense the master-virtue, uniting the soul to God and making it mighty with His might. By this faith He worked what we call miracles. But the miracles of faith are the commonplaces of God. He confronted disease and death with the certainty that they could be overcome. God was everything, the rest mere shadows.

By faith He carried out His self-chosen plan, though everything seemed against Him. Watching Him, we begin to see what faith really is. It meant the certainty that God was good, that He was love, that He meant to save the world. It meant the firm acceptance of God's way of saving the world by His own emptied life of poverty and lowliness,

by the contradiction of sinners, by the appointed humiliation and death of the Cross. It meant the assurance of the joy set before Him, but moving to that joy through suffering, disappointment and apparent failure.

It was as difficult and testing a programme as could be imagined. By faith Christ carried it out, carried it to a triumph which, though not yet realised, is by now certain and obviously the plan and intention of God.

When He called us to have faith, He gave us the inestimable advantage not only of His example but of His aid. For us to have faith becomes much easier as we look at Him. We see the end in view with His eyes. We understand in the light of His experience the obstacles which we encounter. We are not upset by trials, disappointments and the withholding of all the fruits of toil :—

> It is the way the Master went,
> Shall not the servant tread it still?

Now, Hope is so closely allied with Faith that it is difficult to distinguish them. Christian in his pilgrimage had Faithful with him until he sealed his witness in Vanity Fair ; thenceforward Hopeful was his companion to the end. Faith and Hope are different ; but both are needed : the Apostle says : " By faith are ye saved," but also in another place, " We are saved by hope."

It is in the character of Christ that we learn to distinguish the two while we see them perfectly combined. By faith He held to His purpose and pressed on through all difficulties and hindrances to its achievement ; He knew that God would not fail ; He knew that the plan God had made was the best. But by hope He retained the radiance and the joy which infected His disciples, which we ought to share. Hope in Sir Joshua's picture, so unlike Watts's *Hope* in the crumbling nineteenth century, is a lovely maiden, who, the anchor at her feet, which has entered within the veil, with outstretched hands and glowing upturned face, is gazing into the heavens, whence the constant rays of light slant down and envelop her. That is the hope of Jesus. It is a present joy in what is coming ; it is the uplift of the heart and the light on the countenance which testify

to the goal, the haven of our desire, the heaven which is home.

Perhaps it is this truly celestial virtue of hope, so perfectly presented in the life and character of Christ, that gets most overlooked by Christian people. It is in our despondency, our failure of hope, that we fail most in Christlikeness. May I turn aside for a moment to make a confession which, however humiliating to me, may come as a help to someone else? I hold that we are bound to confess our sins one to another, and to help some by our virtues and others by our failures. This is my confession: In the self-examination which I have practised too irregularly, I was trying one day with the help of a Manual of Devotion to find my besetting sin, that I might confess it and surrender it. Now I had always assumed that my besetting sin was one or another of those faults of body or mind which are described by St. Paul as "the works of the flesh." Against those obvious and aggressive sins I had struggled one by one. But in my self-examination that day I made a painful discovery, that *my* besetting sin was not one of these which I shared with so many, but one that was peculiar to myself. Indeed, it was just this, an habitual despondency, which prevented me from seeing all the good things that God had done to me and through me, and kept me in a state of depression about my work and myself and the world.

As in a flash of lightning I saw my life revealed, how God had blessed me and used me, how He had constantly given me the seals that I desired, but I had paid slight attention to His favours, and in a morbid humility had only dwelt on all the failures, the people I had not saved, those who had left me and gone in the opposite direction to that which I desired for them.

I saw how this dejected and dispirited attitude of mind had saddened those who loved me and hindered my work by giving an impression of gloom and despair.

Here my besetting sin stood at last revealed; the bosom sin clasped so close to me that I had never seen its face.

On this discovery I made a full confession to God, which for the good of my soul I repeat here. I asked His forgiveness for my ingratitude and blindness. Forgiven, as I believe,

for Christ's sake, I started again, though late, as a prisoner of hope, to live in unfaltering expectation of the glory which shall follow, looking up to the hills, whence cometh my salvation.

I am inclined to think that Christ meant us to win the world by the light on our faces and the joy in our hearts; that we were in this way to hold forth the word of truth in a dark world and a corrupt generation, in the midst of which we should shine as a light. If that is His intention, we have no right to be despondent, gloomy, depressed. By hope we are saved; by hope we save. It is the buoyant confidence in God, the identification with our Saviour in His joy, in His mighty assurance: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," that should give us the victory. A hopeful disposition is, on the human plane, a great blessing to all who come in contact with it. But on the heavenly plane, in the Christian life, it is that supernatural hope which is a helmet of salvation, an oriflamme which gives cheer and encouragement to the darkened and despondent eyes of men.

As for Love, which Sir Joshua represented by a mother with her child clinging to her skirt and a babe in her arms, it is doubtful whether, before Christ, it was known as a virtue at all. Love to the ancients, and to those who to-day are untouched by Christ, is either passion or convenience. When Christ had come a new Greek word had to be found, ἀγάπη, to describe the new virtue that had shone out in the firmament of human life. It was not so much that Christ selected an unobserved virtue and set it in the forefront of the virtues; it was rather that love in Christ assumed a new meaning and acquired a new power. How this came about becomes clear to anyone who sinks himself in the story of Jesus as it is contained in the Gospels. There one becomes conscious of a human being who from first to last is actuated by an absolute and unquestioning love of God. His Father loves Him, and He loves His Father, in such a way that this love of God is the secret, the inspiration, the directing and impelling power of life. Here love became primarily, and causatively, the love of God. But this divine love resulted in a love to men which is of the same quality. The love of Jesus to men is

very singular. It is curiously individual, and yet it is universal. He loved His mother, as He showed in His obedient childhood, and in the approach of death ; He loved His brethren ; but He carried the same love over to all who did the will of His Father. That is to say, He did not love mother and brethren less, but rather more, because His family widened into the family of God. He loved His disciples, loved them to the end ; but in such a way that He showed His love to all who would believe in Him through their word down to the remotest times—an idea which was expressed by St. Paul when he described Christ loving His Church as a husband loves, or should love, his wife. But that love of Christ was not by any means confined to His kinsfolk or to His disciples and faithful followers. "This man receiveth sinners," they said in astonishment. There could be no mistake about it. He looked on the people who knew not the law, and were, in Pharisaic phrase, accursed, and He loved them. He loved the unpopular tax-collector at the receipt of custom, or in the branches of the sycamore ; He loved the sick and helpless folk, though their illness was brought on by their sin ; He healed them by pronouncing pardon. He loved the fallen woman whom the men who had ruined her despised. He loved the thief whom justice hanged on the tree. There was no limit to His love: it embraced humanity. There was no barrier to it, not sin itself, not hatred to Him, not the murder of Him. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," expressed His heart.

This was evidently something new in the way of love, a new virtue, a new power, a redemptive power. The instinctive love of a mother to her children was here raised to a universal application and an undreamed-of potency. For it was revealed as the very nature of God. "God so loved the world" was the new evangel ; "Men must so love the world" was the new morality.

Christ betrayed no consciousness that this love to God and men which glowed in His own heart was His *peculium*, a property of His unique nature ; He always assumed that it belonged or could belong to every one. In that conviction He formulated the great law which made love the all-inclusive

commandment. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart (i.e. mind) and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." There was the whole and new religion in a sentence. And as Christ expected this supreme and crowning virtue in all, He had some power by which it could be realised in all.

Now, when we realise what this Love of Christ was, and begin to sound its height and breadth and depth and length—to get some glimpse of it, though it passes knowledge, we are inclined to say: No, I can never love like that. It is as much as I can do to love my immediate relatives and friends, and gradually to extend the feeling in cooling circles to some congenial persons who agree with me in taste or opinion; but to love all, to love my enemies, to love those of other races and colours, it is quite impossible." That is what most of us have from time to time said, and again and again we have given up, vanquished by the incurable lovelessness which bounds and encrusts such heart of love as we possess.

But we long to follow Christ, to be like Him, to obey His commandments. We turn to Him, we brood upon His words, we seek contact with His person, we eat His flesh and drink His blood, and a warm glow pervades our hearts, the love of Christ constrains us. Yes, we become conscious of a love which reaches out to all, a love which would seek the lost, the heathen, the ignorant, the wretched, and gather them into the fold of Christ, a love which would give all, sacrifice all, even life itself, to win these who also like ourselves are the Father's children.

> Then with a rush the intolerable craving
> Shivered throughout me like a trumpet call;
> "Oh, to save some, to perish in the saving,
> Die for their life, be offered for them all!"

There are encouragements for those who would reach and hold this universal love of Christ in the lives of those who have gone before us. Let us hearten one another to the sublime endeavour by the examples of St. Paul, St. Francis and David Livingstone, and the vast company, the cloud of witnesses, who have by love to Christ received the love of Christ and come to love all in Christ.

Paul in his singular simplicity encouraged us to be imitators of him as he was of Christ. And often the imitation of Christ's faithful followers brings us to the imitation of Christ Himself; the cords of a man draw us. The saints help us because they were sinners like ourselves Christ, we cannot but feel, for all His manhood, was also God. But these saints are simply human like ourselves—men of like passions, men with obvious faults and limitations—and yet they attained this Christlikeness of love. May not we?

Paul, who sang the praise of Love in 1 Cor. xiii, and recognised what his Master said, that all virtues were included in that one great word, showed also in the life which is unconsciously unfolded in his epistles that love of Christ in being. Such a writing as 2 Corinthians is throughout like the throbbing of a passionate heart, that loves unutterably, that will very gladly spend and be spent for others, even though the more it loves the less it is loved. And Philippians is like a love-letter. The tender intimate relation between the writer and that Church unveils a depth of affection and devotion which is not unlike Christ's own. The note to Philemon, pleading for the slave Onesimus, who had become to Paul a beloved son, with the master of the slave, who was also a beloved son, a spiritual child of the writer, opens up a new conception of the Power of Love, a new redemptive force revealed in the world, which could eventually abolish slavery and reconcile all opponents, injurers and injured. If Paul could love in this mastering and redeeming fashion, so can we.

Francis of Assisi, the troubadour of Spiritual Love, gives us a similar encouragement. The love which made him minister to and embrace the lepers, the love which drew into its meshes the birds, the sun, the sky, the earth, all life and death itself, the love which glowed in his speech and melted crowds to penitence and tears, the love which seemed to consume his body, and wore him out when he was still little over forty; this love of the little poor man of Assisi incites us to a similar devotion. In this way for Christ's sake we may win by love not only our own personal enemies and opponents, but God's enemies and opponents

too. This is our strongest weapon for pulling down the strongholds of evil. *Amor omnia vincit.* Love like Christ's for all, bad and good, may make the bad good, may make the good redemptive.

Livingstone lives in our memory for his heroic and almost unimaginable courage in penetrating the unknown continent and facing wild and savage men unarmed. But the secret of that courage was love. Livingstone's life is the achievement of love. His love for his Africans, his passion to stop the slave trade, which was the open sore of the world; his devotion to wife and children and country, sacrificed for the love of what he felt was the most suffering part of humanity, brings the Love of Christ down to our own day. What Paul was in the first century, what Francis was in the thirteenth, Livingstone could be in the nineteenth. Here is his prayer, typical of his whole life: "To-morrow, Communion in Kirk. The Lord strip off all imperfections, wash away all guilt, breathe love and goodness through all my nature, and make His image shine out from my soul." [1]

That was his constant attitude. He was always at the Communion of Love. Out of his soul the image of Christ did shine.

And in this twentieth century there may be still more wonderful examples of men and women who become Christ-like, receiving through the grace of Christ the Faith and Hope and Love which Christ brought into the world.

Only desire Christ fervently, only mark His footprints, only feel His heart. The great desire for Him brings His image into your consciousness, even if it does not yet show it to the world. Those footprints of His, that story of the Gospels, grow more and more wonderful as you go on; to leave them is your one fear; if you have deviated, you come back to them with a passion of tears. And that heart of Jesus, the Sacred Heart, you may feel it beating, you may take refuge there, you may begin to feel as it feels, to act under its impulse.

Like Him? Yes, the world may not know. Your own trembling poverty and emptiness would repudiate the claim. But He will know: He will claim His kin.

[1] Blaikie's *Personal Life of David Livingstone*, p. 299.

CHAPTER XXX

CONCLUSION

We have been in the foregoing chapters engaged in finding a rule of life, an interpretation and application of Christ's religion which would be possible for men to-day, what an apostle called " the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus."

It can be tested and verified in practice. But a suggestion and a hope may be expressed in this final chapter. This rule of life gives more promise than any other of becoming the rule for all men, and so of uniting all men and all religions in one harmonious body, which would be aptly called the Body of Christ. In the Person and character of Christ, combined with His recorded teaching (if we leave out of account the apocalyptic element), there is a moral and spiritual power which has no parallel in the world. Men in all countries recognise, as soon as they understand it, that this character is what we could wish to be, and what we would wish others to be. It is a view which might be brought home to the whole world : If all people would be Christlike, the world would be in peace and happiness, human life would be justified and the future would be full of hope. This distinctive recognition of Christ, as distinct from acceptance of Christianity or the Church, is a salient fact which only now begins to be perceived. It is well illustrated by an incident which occurred during the agitation for Gandhi's non-co-operative movement in India. A crowd was assembled on the shore at Madras, listening to the fluent speakers who supported the movement. During an interval in which the tired speakers were resting, certain conjurors entertained the people. In the course of the entertainment they held up the numerous gods of Hinduism to ridicule, and the people were much

amused. But the conjurors began to ridicule Christ, and immediately the great crowd hissed them down.

Indians are in revolt against the people who have brought them the knowledge of Christ: they are in no mood to enter the Christian Church. But Christ—that is quite another matter; they recognise there One whom they could not deride. If Christianity were simply Christ, India would receive it. The passionate words of Cheshub Chundra Sen echo in our ears. He was a leader of the Brahmo-Somaj; he never became a Christian, but he said: "None but Jesus, none but Jesus, none but Jesus ever deserved this precious diadem India; and Jesus shall have it." It may be said that in the Eastern mind is a natural sympathy with the character and the ideas of Jesus. The teacher who had not where to lay His head, the lover of men, the healer of their diseases, the instructor of their minds, the preacher of an eternal hope, would naturally appeal to the intensely religious mind of India. But it is remarkable that an even more enthusiastic response to Christ is found in China, hard-headed, practical, materialistic as it is. There Confucianists recognise in Christ the actual living expression of the great moral teaching of their sage. There a soldier like General Feng can not only believe in Christ, but manifest Him to his soldiers, and bring a whole army into some sort of practical obedience to Christ's law. And at the same time a society formed for the moral regeneration of China, though in no sense Christian and avowedly agnostic, commends Christ to the people as the teacher and example that is needed.

There is no power on earth that seems more antagonistic to the Christian Church, and to Christians, than Mohammedanism. But strange to say Islam has no antagonism to Christ. It is the belief of Mohammedans, declared in the Koran, though obscurely,[1] that He will return before the last day and sit in judgment on men in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. It is the dogma about Christ, little understood, that excited the prejudice of the Prophet and his followers. But Jesus, though imperfectly known through apocryphal gospels, was regarded with veneration. And enlightened

[1] Chap. xliv.

Moslems would probably at all times admit that to be Christlike is what they would choose, while they reject Christians because they are not Christlike.

If we could only present Christ to all men, as He was during His earthly life, the Jesus of History; if we could distinguish between His Person and the opinions and theories about it which have been formed, have become crystallised, and then been broken up; if we could leave men to draw their own inferences from the knowledge of His Person as to who He was, what He was, what He now is, and what He will be, we might realise the fulfilment of His promise: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

But, it may be said, has not Christendom rejected Christ? Is it not precisely in the most Christian nations that the criticism of Him and the rejection of Him are most decisive? True, even now are there many antichrists. But, to look only at the latest and the most influential, Nietzsche, there is in the career of all the antichrists a subtle though unmistakable confirmation of Christ. Nietzsche believed that we were rid of Christ for ever, and therefore were free not only from the terrible prospect of life beyond the grave but from the morality which belief in Christ had made. The whole of our accepted ideas of duty to one's neighbour, love, honour, truthfulness, generosity, consideration for others, are based on our belief in God as presented by Christ, the Father who cares for His children and demands that they should care for one another. Apart from such belief there is no obligation to any kind of consideration for each other, and such consideration is wrong and opposed to nature. Against the immorality of Christian morals he set up his own "noble ideal—the deification of passion, revenge, cunning, anger, voluptuousness."

Christ being proved a visionary or an impostor, His morality ought to perish with Him. Nietzsche pours contempt on the modern thinker who rejects the gospel of Christ and yet would retain the principles of that gospel as the basis of our mutual relations. Christ has gone, he says; let the Christian virtues go with Him.

To Nietzsche the virtues were lust, cruelty for cruelty's sake, torture, massacre, deceit, selfishness, exploitation. The

supermen should trample on the herd and keep them in perpetual subjection.

The value of Nietzsche is that he has enabled us to understand what antichrist is, and so to grasp more firmly by contrast what Christ is.

The disaster brought upon his country was his work more than we have as yet been able to perceive. He was a genius, and his thought ran through the life-blood of his nation. He, this supreme antichrist, died insane, and brought Germany down to a ruin from which Christ alone can save her.

Mankind is becoming able now at last to judge between Christ and antichrist. It can see that in the last issue these are the only alternatives. All intermediary theories and practices, whether called religions or non-religions, disappear. The choice is intrinsically in this life and the next between Christ as we see Him in the Gospels and Nietzsche as we saw him in nineteenth-century Germany.

And it is the clearer definition of the situation which is leading men to choose Christ. Once they said, We will not have this Man to rule over us. Now they begin to say: This Man, and this Man only, shall be our King. Once He was despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Now He is becoming the desire of all nations, the one name given among men whereby they may be saved. To be Christlike is to live in peace, in service, in joy, and to pass through death unscathed into a glorious immortality. To be Christlike, if a nation would accept it, is to have a harmony of love and mutual help between all sorts and conditions of men, all using such faculties as they have for the general good, none seeking to overreach, to defraud or to injure his brother. To be Christlike, if the nations will but realise it, is to make the nations parts of one harmonious whole, all races, colours, languages, religions made to contribute to one complete humanity.

As it is seen that these would be the results of bringing every thought into obedience to Christ, men will eagerly submit to His authority and adopt as the rule of life the imitation of Christ.

The human race is wretched in its divisions and antagonisms, torn asunder by racial and religious antipathies. The virtues it has evolved for itself, such as patriotism, love of the nation, devotion to home, are largely the cause of its unrest. It makes religions, which are either too degraded to make men good or, becoming strong, are too narrow to admit of any differences of opinion. Thus its very religions become new occasions of strife and cruelty. Mohammedanism conquers by the sword. Catholicism excludes and persecutes and reduces heresies by the rack and the stake. Protestantism is a new occasion of strife. A thirty years' war brings ruin to Europe in the name of religion. Protestant Germany again in the twentieth century deluges the world with blood. Even after the Great War, Turks and Christians massacre one another in Asia Minor, and the old sad line of Lucretius wails in our ears :—

Tantum relligio potuit suadere malorum.

Poor, distracted human race, where is its deliverer, what can save it from itself? The only answer is, Christ and Christlikeness. When men will receive the Son of Man as Master and Saviour, then and not till then will they achieve their destiny.

Does someone object: this has been tried for all these centuries and has failed. The tragical extent of its failure was shown in the outbreak, the conduct and the *sequelæ* of the Great War. The answer is: No, it has not been tried. Just for a moment it was tried after the Resurrection, and a regenerated world seemed to be coming But then followed a resurgence of Jewish practice, of Greek thought, of Roman lust of power and of all the ancient heathenisms. Constantine captured the Church for Empire and then the Church clutched at Empire for itself. Christianity emerged and hid Christ. His Church became frequently a powerful anti-Christian force.

But the Gospels have been preserved. And there is Christ still showing Himself to the world, drawing the world to Himself. Slowly the world realises that it is Christ it wants. Tired of the religions, tired of the Church, contemptuous of unchristlike representatives of Christ, the

world wants Christ Himself, and is ready to be told that its salvation lies in becoming Christlike, and to learn how that Christlikeness may be achieved.

He who has followed Christ and has discovered Him in the secret place of the soul, discovered the illumination, the cleansing, the renewing, the authority and direction, the hope, and the certitude that Christ gives, acquires a deep conviction, not only that Christ can do this that He has done for him for everyone in human form, but also that it is the Divine purpose to make this experience of Christ some day the experience of all human beings, and by that experience to make them one in a harmonious and effective body—a regenerate body—a solidarity of persons expressing in their unity and totality the perfect will of God.

We can in St. Paul's writings see how that conviction grew in him, from the day when " it pleased God to reveal His Son in him " until those later years in which he thought of God as one Who " will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. It is not Paul's conviction that convinces us, but the same power that convinced Paul convinces everyone who seriously follows Christ and aims at conformity to His image.

It is that conviction of a far-off divine event, which may be much nearer than we think, that fills the life of the Christian with hope and joy. His own brief life acquires its meaning and purpose as a moment in a great progress, the end of which is sure and triumphant. " I hope to see my Redeemer gloriously triumphant at the winding-up of things," said Henry Martyn. That hope sustains and irradiates everyone who follows Christ and experiences His presence.

Such a one is not dismayed by the slowness of the progress, especially as the march of science has immensely lengthened the time-distances on this planet. We now know that millennia of millennia passed in the preparation of the globe for life : that vast uncalculated ages rolled by before life reached its temporary crown in man ; that again from the appearance of man to the appearance of Ideal Man was a stretch of time which history has but imperfectly recorded ; there was a fullness of times before that event

could come which was the beginning of the new order, the grain of mustard-seed dropped in the soil of human life. Since that auspicious dawn which we call the Advent the time is but a day or an hour compared with the " far backward and abysm of time " behind. It is no empty phrase to say that with God a thousand years are but as a day. In that divine reckoning we are, as it were, but in the second day since the Advent, and there may be many more such days before the Consummation. We have, we often confess it, been very slow in preaching Christ to the nations ; but perhaps it has been as quick as was possible. In God's sight it is yet hardly the third day since the Resurrection. Discouragement and disappointment are out of place in the long and leisurely processes of God.

Those who follow Christ are sure of His Advent, not only the Advent which was once at the opening of our era, but the advents which have been repeated and the final Advent which we await. M. Wilfrid Monod has recently suggested that future ages will reckon the coming of Christ at Christmas as divisible into two parts, one when He was born at Bethlehem, the other when He came again in the signing of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Christ is described in the early times as The Coming One, ὁ ἐρχόμενος, i.e. not so much He who will come as He who is always coming. We are entitled to expect a final Advent and a winding up of things, as Henry Martyn called it ; but we should not be blinded to His repeated and continual coming with the development of the life of men and the onward stride of history.

He who follows Christ in close and eager pursuit finds Him coming into his own life with such surprises, such accessions of power, such a revelation of grace on grace, strength on strength, glory on glory, that he cannot help reading Christ's coming to the world in the light of his own experience. He sees with amazement how the vision of Christ has cleared with the ages, how the number of those who live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved them and gave Himself for them, has been constantly growing, how Christ-likeness has become more and more the human Ideal. He is persuaded, therefore, with a persuasion which does not rest on the exegesis of scripture or the quotation of texts, but

on an interior experience, a witness surely of the Holy Spirit, that sure as the coming of Christ was at the beginning of this epoch, so surely, however slowly, will He come and reign over all the earth and all the ages. His reign shines in the heavens, though it is as yet so imperfectly realised on earth. It will continue till every enemy is put beneath His feet, till at His name every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord.

It is this which gives meaning and purpose to human life. The slow, vast process of evolution, organic and inorganic, apart from this lacks reason. The life of man on the planet, apart from this, lacks justification. Without this the future beckons in vain; idly and without significance the great world spins for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

But here is the truth which is the key to the problem of the world's existence and the more racking problem of human life on the earth. Here is the harmonising and interpreting reality, offered, by a miracle of revelation, in that most marvellous of human writings, the prologue of the Fourth Gospel: That wisdom, or reason, or Word, that was with God in the conception of life on the earth, that was God; that was the Agent through whom all came in the course of the long ages to be, that delighted in man, making him in the image of God; that was the Light of life, that lighted every man coming into the world. That Logos became flesh and dwelt among us. Men beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Whoever received Him and believed Him became sons of God. And that was the final purpose of the whole evolutionary process which we call Creation, the manifestation of the sons of God.

The supreme and unique Son of God tabernacled among us for a time, and the record of His sojourn was preserved. And we, in gratitude and love and devotion, would be like Him. That likeness to Him, so gradually attained in the individual, so slowly attained by the world, is yet our one hope and the world's one hope, our one joy and the world's only lasting joy, our one reward—we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is—and the world's one reward, when the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ.

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